

GWINNETT COUNTY CONNECTION

A monthly publication of Gwinnett County Government

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Gwinnett's bicentennial draws to a close

Gwinnett County capped its yearlong bicentennial observation on December 15 with a day of family-friendly festivities and a 200th birthday party celebration at the Infinite Energy Center.

In the preceding 12 months, Gwinnettians gathered to salute our past, embrace our present, and welcome our future. They came together in 365 separate bicentennial-themed events: some fun, some educational, and some somber.

High school distance runners carried the Bicentennial Torch on 36 legs totaling 237 miles, visiting 14 city halls, four libraries, and eight parks. An exhibit on Gwinnett's history toured the county. The Gwinnett Historical Society held monthly lectures about the County's history, ranging from our namesake, Button Gwinnett, to Union Civil War soldiers from Gwinnett, to the impact of railroads on the county's development.

The Gwinnett County Communications Division produced more than 170 videos of Gwinnettians, including natives and newcomers, each telling personal stories about their lives in Gwinnett. Those fascinating remembrances and more about Gwinnett history can still be viewed on the nationally recognized website, www.gwinnett200.com.



Ahora pueden leer Gwinnett County Connection en español en www.gwinnettcounty.com.

AROUND GWINNETT

2019 budget emphasizes public safety, maintenance, employees

The proposed budget for 2019 on the Board of Commissioners' agenda January 3 focuses on public safety, retention of employees, and maintenance of equipment and facilities.

The \$1.82 billion budget as proposed is about 4.8 percent higher than 2018.

The proposal includes a \$1.39 billion operating budget and \$438 million for capital improvements, including SPLOST-funded projects. The budget focuses on funding to maintain core county services such as police and fire protection, jail, courts, roads, transit, and water. Additions for new or ongoing initiatives reflect priorities set by the Board of Commissioners last spring.

The fiscal blueprint adds more police officers, sheriff's deputies, and positions for Fire and Emergency Services. It includes expanding transit and improving roads as well as the airport.

Visit www.gwinnettcounty.com to view the 2019 budget highlights presentation and watch a video on the budget.

New commissioners take office

Gwinnett County officially has two new commissioners effective January 1.

Newly elected District 2 Commissioner Ben Ku and District 4 Commissioner Marlene Fosque took the ceremonial oath of office in late December at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center amid friends and well-wishers.

Ku is a software and mobile app developer and Georgia Tech graduate. He also graduated from Gwinnett 101 Citizens Academy. He received the County's Distinguished Service Award for Most Volunteered Hours in 2017. He also serves in the Mentor Jackets program.

After 20 years in the health insurance industry, Fosque retired from Aetna Inc. in 2017. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Management from Shorter University and a Master of Public Administration from Regent University. She moved to Gwinnett County in 2003. She previously served as an elections poll manager and completed Community Emergency Response Team training in 2015.

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 21 for the Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday. Offices will reopen January 22. Offices also will be closed on February 18 for the Presidents Day holiday and will reopen February 19. 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.exploreghwinnett.com.

Marvel Universe Live

February 22 through 24

Friday at 7:30pm

Saturday at 11:00am, 3:00pm, and 7:00pm

Sunday at 1:00pm and 5:00pm

Infinite Energy Center Arena

6400 Sugarloaf Parkway
Duluth

Men With Money

March 7 through April 7

Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8:00pm

Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2:30pm

Aurora Theatre

128 East Pike Street
Lawrenceville

Footloose

April 12 through April 28

Thursdays and Fridays at 8:00pm

Saturdays at 3:00pm and 8:00pm

Sundays at 3:00pm

Buford Community Center Theatre

2200 Buford Highway
Buford

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

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Questions about your water bill? Call 678.376.6700.



gwinnettSPLOST.com

your pennies
for transportation

Snellville bridge to be replaced

The Board of Commissioners recently approved a contract to replace the bridge on Springdale Road at No Business Creek near Snellville.

The project will raise the bridge above the 100-year flood level. Curb and gutter, sidewalks, and drainage improvements will also be included.

The bridge replacement will require a road closure at the bridge, which is anticipated to begin in spring 2019. During the closure, access to all driveways will be maintained on either side of the bridge. Signs will direct motorists along the detour route until the road reopens, which is expected in fall 2019.

The \$2.77 million project is being paid for by 2009 and 2014 SPLOST funds.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Know the symptoms of CO poisoning

Deaths from carbon monoxide spike every year in winter-time as people try to warm up with faulty or improperly used or maintained generators, stoves, fireplaces, and furnaces.

CO, which is odorless and colorless, is produced when fuel is burned. Symptoms of CO poisoning include headache, fatigue, nausea, dizziness, confusion, vomiting, unconsciousness, and even death.

CO alarms should be installed outside sleeping areas and on each level of the home. They are not substitutes for smoke alarms.

Here are some tips to avoid CO poisoning:

- Use portable generators outdoors away from windows, doors, or vents
- Make sure vents for your furnace, stove, fireplaces, and dryers are not blocked
- Annually inspect your heating system, water heater, and fireplaces
- Only use charcoal grills and camp stoves outdoors
- Don't use a gas oven for heat

For additional information, please call 678.518.4845 or email fireprograms@gwinnettcountry.com.

PROTECTING OUR RESOURCES



Harvest rainwater, save money, and help the environment

Rainwater may seem like a weird thing to harvest, but it has been done for thousands of years by civilizations around the globe. Rain barrels can harvest rainwater from your home by collecting it from downspouts from your roof and gutters. Harvested rainwater can be used to irrigate plants during dry periods between rain events.

Most barrels hold about 50 gallons of water, and you can connect multiple barrels together to hold even more. Gravity forces the water out of the barrel when you open the spigot, and a water pump can transport water to the farthest parts of your yard.

Connecting your barrels to multiple downspouts may even qualify you for a credit on your Stormwater Utility Fee. Rain barrels can also be decorated to blend in with the house or complement the landscaping, or it could serve as a blank canvas for the kids to paint.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, rain barrels can:

- Divert water back to the landscape
- Conserve tap water and energy use
- Lower your water bill and utility bills
- Protect rivers and streams from erosion

To learn more about the importance of rain barrels, see how to install and maintain them, and purchase a barrel for your home, attend the Department of Water Resources' free Rain Barrel workshop on Saturday, February 9 at 1:00pm at the Grayson Senior Center at 485 Grayson Parkway in Grayson. Prepayment of \$30 is required.

Visit the DWR events page at www.gwinnettcountry.com or call 678.376.7193 for more information.

TAX COMMISSIONER

Emissions testing update

For 2019, all gasoline-powered and light-duty trucks 8,500 pounds or less with the model years 1995 – 2016 require an emissions test to register and renew. For testing locations, visit www.cleanairforce.com. Once your vehicle has been tested, renew online at www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com.

CHECK IT OUT

Learning Labs provide tools to be creative

In addition to a world of books, the Gwinnett County Public Library offers creative people tools to help them make their projects a reality. Learning Labs are community makerspaces where people can develop their ideas using the library's equipment and software for their own innovative or inspiring projects, both digital and hands-on. From audiovisual equipment and 3D printers to sewing machines and microcomputers, you can use the Learning Labs for free – all you need is your library card. For more information, to view upcoming classes, or to book the lab, visit www.gwinnettpl.org/learninglabs.

Department of Water Resources
2019 February Water Workshops

Detention Pond Maintenance
February 7 • 6:00pm – 7:30pm
Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center
Conference Room C
75 Langley Drive, Lawrenceville

Learn about the purpose, function, and aesthetic value of your detention pond in addition to troubleshooting tips.

Rain Barrels – Make and Take
February 9 • 1:00pm – 3:00pm
Grayson Senior Center
485 Grayson Parkway, Grayson

Make your own rain barrel and learn about collecting and using rainwater. Preregistration is required with \$30 prepayment. Workshop is outdoors.

Three ways to register:

Visit the Events page at www.gwinnettH2O.com
Send an email with your name, address, and phone number to dwrworkshops@gwinnettcountry.com

Call 678.376.7193