

GWINNETT  
COUNTY

SEPTEMBER  
2021

# Connection

**A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF  
GWINNETT COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

## **BOC approves independent review of County operations**

The Board of Commissioners recently hired an outside consultant to analyze County operations with the goal of maximizing efficiency and effectiveness.

Commissioners awarded Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC, a \$292,000 contract to compare Gwinnett to other local governments' best practices and study how the County can better deliver services to residents, businesses, and visitors.

The review will survey County departments and their organization, strategic initiatives, key business practices, and technology use to identify strengths, challenges, modifications, enhancements, and investments needed to meet future demand.



## **AROUND GWINNETT**

### **Celebrate Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month with Gwinnett**

Gwinnett County will celebrate the contributions of our Hispanic and Latino community during Hispanic and Latino Heritage Month, which runs September 15 to October 15. The festivities will include a special recognition and reception at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center with guest speakers, entertainment, and cultural cuisine. A Latino and Hispanic cultural exhibit will be on display at GJAC, located at 75 Langley Drive in Lawrenceville.

### **Gwinnett now a Purple Heart County**

As a sign of Gwinnett County's deep respect for men and women wounded or killed in defense of our country, the Board of Commissioners has proclaimed Gwinnett as a Purple Heart County.

Recipients of the Purple Heart are eligible for a 10 percent discount on park facility rentals and plus admission to pools, open gyms, tennis centers, programs, and classes. They also can receive free pet adoptions and free radon or soil tests from UGA Extension Gwinnett.

The Purple Heart Medal is awarded to military personnel wounded or killed in combat. Purple Heart recipients should show their DD214 papers or a membership card from the Military Order of the Purple Heart to receive the discounts and benefits.

### **Gwinnett police to appear on 'The First 48' and 'After the First 48'**

You may soon be able to see the Gwinnett Police Department on national TV. The Board of Commissioners approved a contract renewal with Kirkstall Road Enterprises to film and produce "The First 48" and its new spinoff series, "After the First 48."

Camera crews have followed detectives around since 2017. "The First 48" gives viewers a behind-the-scenes look at homicide investigations within the two days after the crime occurred. "After the First 48" revisits cases and goes beyond the initial investigation, interviewing victims' families, detectives, prosecutors, and defense attorneys.

Episodes for both shows will air later this year and early next year.



## **PROTECTING OUR RESOURCES**

### **Keep your leaves out of drains and streams**

The colorful, crunchy leaves of autumn are fun to pile up and jump in, but they could cause water pollution if they are swept or blown into storm drains leading directly to local waterways.

Decomposing leaves add excess nutrients and allow algae to grow to unhealthy population sizes, which can negatively affect the underwater ecosystem. Leaves and other yard debris can also cause a serious blockage in a storm drain, which can lead to localized flooding during heavy rain.

Here are some useful tips for dealing with your leaves this fall that can save money on fertilizer, reduce outdoor water use, and protect our water resources:

- Don't blow or rake leaves into the street or a storm drain
- Rake leaves away from storm drains and out of the curb and gutter
- Compost fallen leaves for free fertilizer to use in your garden
- Use fallen leaves as mulch in your landscape

### **Pay your water bill online!**

Water Resources offers quick and easy online bill payment. Just visit [GwinnettCounty.com](http://GwinnettCounty.com) and click on "Pay Water Bill" at the very top of the page.

It's easy to set up an online account using information from your water bill. From here, you can view your current bill and make a payment online.

## TAX COMMISSIONER

### Property tax bills due October 15

The 2021 Gwinnett County property tax bills were mailed in August and are due October 15. If you have an escrow account, your property tax information is available to your mortgage company; however, it is your responsibility to ensure taxes are paid. Paying online is quick and secure. To learn how, visit [GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com/Pay](https://GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com/Pay).

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### Don't underestimate thunderstorms

All thunderstorms are dangerous because they can produce strong winds, lightning, tornadoes, hail, and flash flooding. The typical thunderstorm is 15 miles in diameter and lasts about 30 minutes. Winds can exceed speeds of 125 mph and produce damage similar to a tornado. Remember the 30/30 lightning safety rule: Go indoors if — after seeing lightning — you cannot count to 30 before hearing thunder. Stay indoors for 30 minutes after hearing the last clap of thunder.

According to the National Weather Service, Georgia typically experiences 45 to 55 days with thunderstorms each year, with about 10 percent of the storms classified as severe.

If a thunderstorm is likely in your area, do these things:

- Postpone outdoor activities
- Avoid natural lightning rods such as a tall, isolated tree in an open area and hilltops, open fields, the beach, or a boat on the water
- Get inside a building
- Unplug computers and other appliances



## SPLOST

### New state-of-the-art library coming to Snellville

Gwinnett County and the city of Snellville are planning a new state-of-the-art library in The Grove at Town Center development on Wisteria Drive. The two-story building will house the library on the first floor while the second floor will be operated by the city for coworking space, college classes, and other public or educational uses.

The branch will replace the Elizabeth Williams Library on Lenora Church Road. The 22,000-square-foot space will include adult, teen, and children's areas; 20 computer workstations; and a multipurpose room. The County and the city are jointly funding the \$10.2 million project using 2017 SPLOST program dollars.

## CHECK IT OUT

### Library hosts October gala to support programs

The Gwinnett County Public Library is hosting its annual gala, Puttin' On The Litz, October 23 at the Gas South District. The event will feature a keynote speaker and Georgia Bulldog legend Vince Dooley. The gala will include dinner, a wine wall, music, dancing, and a silent auction featuring a variety of items and experiences. Proceeds will support some of the library's programs in areas like literacy, STEAM education, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. For information on sponsorships and tickets, contact Jason DiFranco at [JDiFranco@GwinnettPL.org](mailto:JDiFranco@GwinnettPL.org).



## SERVING GWINNETT

### Gwinnett constructing sensory treehouse

The Board of Commissioners recently approved the construction of a \$4.1 million sensory treehouse at the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center that will allow visitors with disabilities to experience the sensation of being in a canopy of trees. The sensory treehouse, designed to accommodate all ages and abilities, will resemble a giant American chestnut tree of Georgia's historic forests. To reach the sensory treehouse, visitors will travel on an ADA-accessible boardwalk with self-directed learning stations, or nodes, that connect visitors to nature by touch, smell, or sight.

In the treehouse building, visitors will experience an indoor sensory exhibit that uses video, audio, and scents to convey a piedmont forest. The sloping landscape will create the illusion they are soaring among the trees. The project is funded by the 2017 SPLOST program. Construction is scheduled to begin this fall and take about a year to complete.

### Listen to Gwinnett Moms and get vaccinated

The COVID-19 virus is making a comeback, and Gwinnett Moms are having none of it. They want to get back to the way life was before, and they're pretty adamant about what we have to do to get there: get vaccinated, wear a mask, and wash your hands often.

Vaccines are proven to be safe and highly effective against severe illness and death. If you're vaccinated and you do catch the virus, chances are you'll have a mild case. Some people may have the virus and not have any symptoms, so they could be spreading it without knowing. Because the virus is largely spread by breathing, masks can help keep it from spreading.

Visit [ListenToGwinnettMoms.com](https://ListenToGwinnettMoms.com) to learn more about COVID-19 vaccines and schedule your appointment. Then, join the conversation on social media by tagging [@GwinnettGov](https://GwinnettGov) and using #ListenToGwinnettMoms.

## GWINNETT COUNTY CONNECTION

ESCANEE PARA LEER EN ESPAÑOL  
한국어 버전은 QR 코드를 스캔해 주세요



Gwinnett County Connection questions/comments:  
[Info@GwinnettCounty.com](mailto:Info@GwinnettCounty.com) | 770.822.7180  
Water bill questions: 678.376.6700