

# Volunteer Gwinnett NEWS



June 2021

## Greetings!

Welcome to Volunteer Gwinnett News, a quarterly newsletter to help you stay informed about opportunities to volunteer, how to become a volunteer, and the work volunteers are doing in our community. Volunteers are an essential part of Gwinnett County Government; their selfless contributions ensure projects get done, improve the community's quality of life, build partnership bonds, save tax dollars, and keep us all vibrantly connected.

## Summer Meals Program 2021

We need your help to eliminate food insecurity in Gwinnett. Volunteer at one of our [25 locations](#) and assist with curbside pickup of grab-and-go breakfast and lunch sacks for children 18 years or younger, or 19 years old or up with physical or mental impairment. Volunteers have helped us serve more than 35,000 meals since June 1 and we are always in need of daily help from 11:00am to 1:00pm, Monday through Friday.

For more information and a list of locations, visit [GwinnettSummerMeals.com](http://GwinnettSummerMeals.com) or call 770.822.8840.

Interested in volunteering? Register online for the [2021 Summer Meals Program](#) or email [VolunteerGwinnett@GwinnettCounty.com](mailto:VolunteerGwinnett@GwinnettCounty.com).



## COVID-19 Response – Mobile Food Distribution



Since Spring of 2020, Community Services has partnered with the Atlanta Community Food Bank to provide fresh and shelf-stable food to families in need across the county. Working with local community partners as host sites, Tuesday distributions have incorporated drive-thru, walk-up, and home delivery formats.

Throughout this partnership, community partners, volunteers, and staff have conducted 103 mobile markets, distributing 677,914 pounds of food to 13,874 households, impacting 56,737 residents!

During these distributions not only was the community provided with food, Gwinnett Fire and Emergency Services also checked car seats for safety and signed up families to have free home smoke alarms installed.

We need your assistance to continue this important service through the end of this year. [Click here](#) to volunteer or if your community would like to host a Tuesday distribution, email [VolunteerGwinnett@GwinnettCounty.com](mailto:VolunteerGwinnett@GwinnettCounty.com).

## Volunteers in Action

National Volunteer Week was held April 18 through 24. Our Live Healthy Gwinnett team hosted multiple events at the Harvest Gwinnett

community gardens. A total of 29 volunteers got their hands dirty by preparing community share-rows and getting the gardens ready for the growing season. [Harvest Gwinnett](#) is so thankful for everyone who participated in these events!



Volunteers were energetic and tremendously helpful in planting tomatoes, peppers, corn, bush beans, pole beans, eggplant, squash, and more! Everything harvested will be donated to local organizations to distribute back into the community. This effort would not be possible without the support and dedication of our volunteers. For volunteering opportunities, email [HarvestGwinnett@GwinnettCounty.com](mailto:HarvestGwinnett@GwinnettCounty.com) or visit [LiveHealthyGwinnett.com](http://LiveHealthyGwinnett.com).



### **Solid Waste Management and Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful Celebrate Earth Day**

Twenty-eight volunteers came out in the torrential rain to lend a hand at the annual Earth Day event on April 24 at the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds. 1,115 vehicles drove-thru, dropping off items which cannot be recycled at the curb. Vendors collected 86 gallons of oil-based paint, 4,850 gallons of latex paint, 6 tons of tires, 15 tons of paper which were shredded on site, and 19 tons of electronic

equipment. Thank you volunteers for helping to make Earth Day such a huge success!

### **Great Gwinnett Wetlands**

On May 1, Water Resources, Parks and Recreation, and Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful teamed up to host the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Great Gwinnett Wetlands event at Bethesda Park. Seventy-six volunteers, mostly from local environmental consulting firms, broke into five small groups to safely clean litter and remove an invasive plant called privet hedge from the flooded wetlands along Sweetwater Creek. By the end of the day, the volunteers collected over 2,800 pounds of trash and cleared almost an entire acre of privet, leaving the wetland ecosystem clean and beautiful for both people and wildlife to enjoy. For more volunteer park workdays and events, visit [VolunteerGwinnett.net](http://VolunteerGwinnett.net).



### **Pre-Park Planning Privet Pull**

On May 8, twenty-six volunteers split into groups at the future site of the Beaver Ruin Wetlands Park to remove an invasive plant called privet hedge. This activity was organized by Gwinnett Water Resources in partnership with the companies involved in planning the new park. The removal of privet will help prepare the site for the new park by creating space for native vegetation to recolonize the area, providing an opportunity for enhanced biodiversity, and improved ecological health. Volunteers were able to remove almost 400 pounds of trash to help even more!



### **Parks and Recreation**

On May 19, using loppers and bow saws, 19 volunteers from Atlanta Gas Light came out to help remove invasive plant species at Shorty Howell Park. Approximately a quarter acre of invasive privet and mimosa trees were removed from a wetland in the park. This work will help us later in the fall as we go back with more volunteers to help replenish the wetland with native plant species during our Native Wetland Workshop.

### **Girls Scouts**

On May 20, Girl Scouts from Troop 19725 created eight brand new eastern bluebird houses and installed them around the trails at Rhodes Jordan Park to replace older degraded ones onsite.



### **Earth and Global Youth Service Day**

On May 22, 11 volunteers teamed up with Gwinnett Parks and Recreation for Earth and Global Youth Service Day to continue the privet removal project along the streambank of Freeman's Mill Park that had been started back in February. They were able to open up a sizeable portion of the understory to give native species a fighting chance at reclaiming the habitat.



## We need you; get involved!

### Health and Human Services

Gwinnett Senior Centers need volunteers as they have opened their facilities for senior activities. Share your time, talent, and life experiences. Interested in volunteering? Click [here](#).

### Parks and Recreations

June 30: [Student Day of Summer Service at Freeman's Mill Park](#)

July 9: [Rhodes Jordan Trash Bash at Rhodes Jordan Park](#)

July 17: [Litter Pickup at Graves Park/Recogida de Basura](#)

July 30: [Privet Pull at Vines Park](#)

## Volunteer Liaison Highlight

This quarter's spotlight is Parks Volunteer Resources Coordinator, Nathan Griswell!

Nathan brings a wealth of knowledge and a passion for service from his previous role as Program Supervisor with the Natural & Cultural Resources Management section with Gwinnett Parks & Recreation. He utilizes his passion for environmental education in working with the UGA Extension Gwinnett's Master Gardener volunteers, facilitating creative Eagle Scout projects, leading volunteer birds counts, and providing bilingual programs. Aside from his strong backing in Natural Resources, he holds a B.S. in Environmental Biology and is fluent in Spanish.



Nathan is committed to building a diverse community for the people and wildlife that call Gwinnett home through volunteerism. The entire Volunteer Resources team is brimming with creativity and passion for outdoor stewardship opportunities across the County's more than 50 parks. You can reach Nathan at [VolunteerInParks@GwinnettCounty.com](mailto:VolunteerInParks@GwinnettCounty.com).



Volunteer  
Gwinnett

**Volunteer Today!** [VolunteerGwinnett.net](http://VolunteerGwinnett.net)

770.822.7955 • [volunteergwinnett@gwinnettcounty.com](mailto:volunteergwinnett@gwinnettcounty.com)