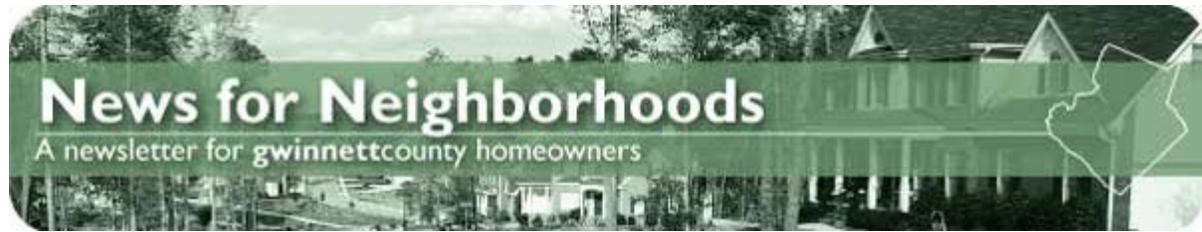


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January 18, 2013

#### In this issue:

- State of the County address
- New countywide calendar
- MLK closings
- Motor vehicle tax changes
- Annual plant sale
- Keep your home healthy

#### Dear Emily,

As a resident of Gwinnett County, you know there is always a lot going on in the community.

[Gwinnett County Government](#) would appreciate your help keeping your neighbors informed by sharing the following information through your homeowner association newsletter, website, and emails and by talking to your friends and family.

 [Forward to a Friend](#)

#### Chairman Nash delivers 2013 State of the County address

Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners Chairman Charlotte Nash delivered her State of the County address ([read the text](#)) on Wednesday, January 16, 2013, at the Gwinnett Center during the annual State of the County luncheon hosted by the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce and the Council for Quality Growth.



Chairman Nash touched on the [previous year's accomplishments](#), the critical issues facing the County in the coming year, and the idea of a starting new chapter in Gwinnett's history. She encouraged residents and business owners to be engaged. "We need you to be informed, to get involved, and to stay in touch," she said.

The State of the County address will be available for viewing beginning at 8:00pm tonight on TVgwinnett, which is accessible [online](#), [on demand](#) and on the government access cable channels of Charter, Comcast, and AT&T- U-verse. The program will periodically air throughout the new year.

#### County launches comprehensive calendar



The County hosts many events, classes, and workshops at locations around Gwinnett.

See them all on the County's new comprehensive calendar at [www.gwinnettcountryevents.com](http://www.gwinnettcountryevents.com).

## County offices closed for MLK holiday

All Gwinnett County government offices, with the exception of those operations required for the comfort and safety of the citizens of the County, will be closed Monday, January 21 for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. County offices will resume normal business hours on Tuesday, January 22. A Magistrate Court judge will be available at the Gwinnett County Detention Center during the holiday.

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day is not a trash and recycling holiday** for solid waste providers in unincorporated Gwinnett County, so trash and recycling collections are scheduled as normal. The Gwinnett County Solid Waste and Recycling Call Center will be closed that day, but hauler call centers will be open. Residents can [search for their solid waste hauler](#) to find their hauler's contact information.

Residents who live in a city should contact their city to find out if trash and recycling will be delayed due to the holiday.

## Commissioner Howard wants to hear from you!

District 2 Commissioner Lynette Howard will host a Town Hall Meeting on Wednesday, January 30 from 6:30pm to 9:30pm at Norcross City Hall, located at 65 Lawrenceville Street in Norcross.

Commissioner Howard will discuss recycling in the County and give residents the opportunity to ask questions or express concerns during the meeting. Additional meetings will take place in the near future, so stay tuned for more dates and locations.

## New motor vehicle title tax effective March 1

Effective March 1, 2013, *House Bill 386* removes the sales tax and the annual ad valorem tax on newly purchased vehicles. It replaces these taxes with a new title tax of 6.5 percent in 2013. Here's what you need to know:



- If you purchase a vehicle on or after March 1, 2013, you will pay the new **title tax** to the tag agent in the county in which you register the vehicle. You pay when you apply for the title and register the vehicle.
- The new title tax is not due every year but is due each time the vehicle is sold and titled. It applies to dealer sales as well as **sales between individuals**.
- The new title tax is based on a percentage (6.5 percent in 2013) of the **fair market value** of the vehicle, not the sales price, as determined by the Georgia Department of Revenue.
- You will continue to pay the annual ad valorem tax on vehicle(s) that you currently own.
- If you purchase a vehicle in Georgia between January 1, 2012, and March 1, 2013, (when the new program begins) you have the option of paying the new title tax instead of the current annual ad valorem tax. You have from March 1, 2013, until December 31, 2013, to opt into the new program. **Note: Vehicles purchased out-of-state are not eligible to opt in.**
- All other existing annual vehicle registration requirements, including annual tag renewal fees, decals, and emission tests (if applicable), remain in effect for all vehicle owners.

For more information and a title tax calculator, visit [www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com](http://www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com).

## Cooperative Extension 2013 Plant Sale

Winter is the perfect time to plan your spring garden, and the [Cooperative Extension Service](#) wants to help by offering locally grown plants during their annual plant sale. So walk your landscape and envision where you could place some delicious blueberries, apples, figs or maybe some beautiful azaleas or gardenias.



Orders must be placed by March 12, and the pickup date is March 21 at the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds.

See a [list](#) of the plants for sale and basic information about each plant. Print an [order form](#) or call 678.377.4010 for more information.

### 5 tips for a healthy home

Americans spend more than 90 percent of their time indoors, so a home environment free of contaminants is important to our health. Below are five things you can do to improve your home's indoor air quality:



1. **Test your home for Radon:** This radioactive gas comes from the natural decay of uranium and can be found in nearly all soils. It typically moves through the ground and into your home through cracks and holes in the walls, floors, and foundation. Any home can have a high radon level. To learn more about testing your home, go to [www.ugaradon.com](http://www.ugaradon.com).
2. **Keep indoor humidity below 60 percent:** Excessive humidity can lead to mold growth, which can trigger asthma episodes in some sensitive individuals. Reduce the humidity in your home by using exhaust fans when bathing or cooking; vent the clothes dryer to the outside; and do not over water houseplants. Purchase a humidistat to track the humidity level in your home.
3. **Reduce the use of synthetic air fresheners:** Studies have shown that some plug-in air fresheners emit up to 20 volatile organic compounds (VOCs), including seven that are regulated as toxic or hazardous under federal laws. Synthetic fragrances can lead to respiratory problems for some individuals. To reduce VOCs in your home, use natural air fresheners, open the windows and let in fresh air in when possible, stop using aerosol sprays, and switch to green cleaning products.
4. **Make your home a no smoking area:** Researchers have found that secondhand smoke increases a child's risk of asthma, cancer, sudden infant death syndrome, and ear and respiratory infections. The smoke from cigarettes contains more than 4,000 chemicals. Not allowing smoking indoors is the best way to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke.
5. **Stop dirt, pesticides, and other pollutants in their tracks:** Keep from tracking these pollutants into your home by placing a doormat in front of all exterior doors and leaving your shoes at the door.

For more tips on improving your indoor environment, contact Ines Beltran with the Cooperative Extension Service at [inesb@uga.edu](mailto:inesb@uga.edu) or go to [www.ugagreenway.com](http://www.ugagreenway.com).

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