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February 15, 2013

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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](#)

It's always Black Friday at the Animal Welfare Center

Every Friday is Black Friday at the Gwinnett Animal Welfare and Enforcement Center! All mostly black dogs and cats are available at the center for only a \$30 cash veterinarian fee. The fee includes spaying or neutering, the first round of vaccinations, and a microchip.

For information, visit www.gwinnettanimalcontrol.com or call 770.339.3200. You can also stop by the center from 10:00am to 4:00pm, Tuesday through Saturday. The center is located at 884 Winder Highway in Lawrenceville.



County offices closed for Presidents' Day 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, February 18 for the Presidents' Day holiday. County offices will resume normal business hours on Tuesday, February 19. A Magistrate Court judge will be available at the Gwinnett County Detention Center during the holiday.

Presidents' 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 contact their solid waste hauler with any questions or concerns. Residents who live in a city should contact their city to find out if trash and recycling will be delayed due to the holiday.

Reduce Your Tax Bill: Apply for Homestead Exemptions



The best way to reduce your property tax bill is to apply for homestead exemptions. The application deadline is **April 1**. For all exemptions, you must own and occupy the property as your primary residence as of January 1 of the tax year for which application is being made. **Applications for 2013 exemptions will not be accepted after April 1.**

You may apply online at our website or contact the Property Tax Department for an application. If you mail the completed application, we recommend using certified mail; the signed certified signature card, along with a postmark on or before the deadline, will serve as proof of timely application. Once granted, the homestead exemption is automatically renewed each year.

To find out more about the 14 exemptions available and eligibility requirements, visit www.GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com or contact the Tax Commissioner's Office at tax@gwinnettcountry.com or 770.822.8800.

IT upgrades cause outages over Presidents' Day weekend

Required upgrades will be made to a number of County business systems causing outages beginning at 5:30pm on Friday, February 15. **The systems will be unavailable through Tuesday, February 19 at 8:00am.**



The following functions will be unavailable during that time:

- Online water bill payment and self-service forms
- Citizen Self-Service
- All licensing and revenue services (business occupation/tax renewal will be available until midnight on February 15)
- ESS (Employee Self-Service)
- SRM (Supplier Relationship Management)

We apologize in advance for the inconvenience.

Commissioner Howard wants to hear from you!

District 2 Commissioner Lynette Howard will host a Town Hall Meeting on Wednesday, February 20 from 7:00pm to 9:00pm at Peachtree Corners City Hall, located at 147 Technology Parkway, Suite 200, in Peachtree Corners.

Commissioner Howard will discuss recycling in the County and give residents the opportunity to ask questions or express concerns during the meeting.

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 its 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.



Helping your house plants survive winter

Houseplants usually require more water during the winter. Indoor heating systems lower the humidity in your home, causing the plants to dry out. The [Gwinnett Cooperative Extension Service](#) recommends keeping an eye on the amount of water your plants are retaining.

To determine if your plants need to be watered, stick your finger at least one inch into the soil. If it's dry, then add room temperature water that's approximately 65 to 75°F. You know you've added the right amount of water when it begins trickling out of the bottom of the pot.

To help maintain humidity, consider grouping plants together in the same area. You can also fill shallow trays with gravel and a couple of inches of water and place your pots in them. Just make sure that your plants are sitting above the water and their roots are not placed in the sitting water.



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