

News for Neighborhoods

A newsletter for gwinnettcounty homeowners

July 22, 2011

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Dear Homeowner:

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 information below through your homeowner association newsletter, website, and e-mails and by talking to your friends and family. Click on *forward this e-mail to a friend* below to share this newsletter!

Commission approves new land buying policy

Gwinnett County commissioners adopted a new policy that sets out strict procedures for acquiring land. Board Chairman Charlotte Nash said, "Adopting this new policy is the right thing to do. It clearly outlines the process for making good decisions about land acquisitions and holds the Board of Commissioners and County staff accountable for our actions."

A Special Grand Jury last October criticized several land purchases and said the acquisition process "should follow a clearly-defined system of policies and procedures." The new eight-page policy covers ethics requirements and duties of staff and commissioners and spells out a process calling for a 17-point written report on proposed land acquisitions. Specifically, property that is considered for acquisition must tie into an existing master plan, project, program, or other documented need; the source and amount of funding budgeted for the purchase must also be verified.

Additionally, the policy includes procedures for buying right-of-way and easements for transportation, water, and sewer projects along with sections on how to handle land donations and condemnation proceedings. It also directs the County attorney to provide the Gwinnett County Grand Jury a summary report of all land acquisitions other than rights-of-way and easements. [Click here](#) to read more.

Parks and Recreation beats the heat with cool treats

[Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation](#) is hosting an old-fashioned evening at the Gwinnett Historic Courthouse in Lawrenceville on **July 29 from 6:30pm - 8:30pm**.

Enjoy ice cream sundaes and live music by Gwinnett Dance and Drum. Bring your lawn chairs and your friends for this event that is great for all ages. Admission is \$5 per person.



Civic League for Regional Atlanta hosts town hall meeting

[The Civic League for Regional Atlanta](#) is hosting ***Get a Move On: A 10-County Town Hall on Transportation, Growth, and the Future of the Atlanta Region***. This first-ever regional town hall meeting will bring together hundreds of residents from the 10 counties in metro Atlanta. The facilitated conversation is designed to hear residents' views on regional transportation. Topics include environmental sustainability, economic growth, investments, accountability, and governance.

If you are interested in attending, the meeting will be on **July 23** from **8:30am - noon** at the Loudermilk Center, located at 40 Courtland Street in Atlanta. Space is limited, so please [register online](#) or call 404.221.1553. Visit www.getamoveonATL.com for more information.

Tomatoes - No garden would be complete without them!

Tomatoes are one of the most popular garden plants. They are relatively easy to grow and are an excellent choice for gardeners with limited space, yet each plant has the potential to yield 10 to 15 pounds of fruit.



To get started, purchase tomato transplants that are healthy and six to 10 inches in height. Tomatoes can develop roots all along their stems, so plant them as deep as their first set of leaves to encourage a strong root system. Space them at least three feet apart for proper air circulation, and avoid planting tomatoes in the same place every year. Disease organisms and insect pests have a tendency to build up in the soil over time. Keep in mind that tomatoes are warm season plants that should be planted after all danger of frost has passed.

Maintaining your crop

Tomato plants require full sunlight and at least one inch of water per week. The plants prefer well-drained soil and should have an application of a 10-10-10 balanced fertilizer applied every four weeks. Consider placing some bark or pine straw two to three inches around the base of the plants to keep moisture in the soil and to control weeds.

Prune them to have only one or two main stems. Be sure to remove any suckers arising from the roots or the nodes and cut off any branches and leaves touching the ground. Tomatoes do have a tendency to fall over, especially when they are loaded with fruit, so stake the tomato plants with wooden or steel stakes, tie the plants to a fence, or use tomato cages.

Blossom end rot is a disorder common to tomatoes. When this occurs, the fruit develops a dark sunken water-soaked area at the blossom end. This is due to a low calcium concentration in the fruit, often resulting from the plant being under stress due to lack of water followed by excessive soil moisture. Consider giving the plant calcium through applying dolomitic limestone. To help keep the soil evenly moist, use mulch and provide a deep watering once or twice a week.

Source: [Gwinnett County Cooperative Extension Service](#)

Police offers teen driving classes

The Gwinnett Police Department's crime prevention officers are offering the ***P.R.I.D.E. Program*** (Parents Reducing Injuries and Driver Error) safe driving classes to assist new drivers and their parents. The *P.R.I.D.E. program* is a **free, national award-winning**, two-hour course designed to educate teen drivers ages 14 - 16. Officers do not conduct any behind the wheel training but instruct parents and teens on what to expect during the 40 hours of supervised practice driving time required by Georgia law and throughout their driving experience.

Upcoming classes are held at 6:30pm. Class dates and contact information to register are listed below. For precinct locations, [click here](#). Please register early; classes fill up fast.

July 26: East Precinct (Dacula), 770.338.7430 ext. 5696

Aug 3: East Precinct (Dacula), 770.338.7430 ext. 5696

In addition to the *P.R.I.D.E. program*, crime prevention officers also present ***Traffic Safety for Teens***. The free, 45-minute class will cover crash dynamics, seat belts, speeding, alcohol, distractions such as texting while driving, road rules, and street signs.

To schedule a *Traffic Safety for Teens* class, contact Officer H. Stafford at 770.338.7430 ext. 5696.

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