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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 following information through your homeowner association newsletter, website, and emails and by talking to your friends and family.



What's new on TVgwinnett?



Gwinnett County brings you the latest news and happenings about your community through Eye on Gwinnett, our bi-weekly news program.

What you'll see in this episode:

- Bicentennial torch visits Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center
- Club Drive Park to see improvements
- Unified Plan update kicks off with hearing
- County working with Lawrenceville to landscape Ga. 316 at Ga. 120

Gwinnett's 2018 budget focuses on security, general well-being for residents

The Board of Commissioners on **January 2** approved the 2018 budget, which focuses on safety and quality of life for Gwinnett residents.

The budget includes several new police positions, more ambulance crews, parks improvements, and other projects to benefit residents and make Gwinnett an attractive place to live and do business.

Totaling about \$1.67 billion, the budget consists of about \$1.28 billion in operating and about \$390 million for capital improvements, including SPLOST-funded projects. The budget reflects specific priorities set by



the Board of Commissioners last spring as well as the recommendations of a seven-member committee made of citizen volunteers.

The budget sets aside money for 65 new police officers, two additional 24/7 ambulance crews and a ladder truck crew, construction of a new Bay Creek Police Precinct, and libraries, parks, and senior services. Funding for an expansion of the civic center, a small business resource center, and more planning and development staff falls under the "strong and vibrant local economy" priority. The global water innovation center and pay-for-performance increases to maintain a quality workforce fall under the "smart and sustainable government" priority.

For more about the 2018 budget, visit our website at www.gwinnettcountry.com.

Have some java with an officer at Coffee with a Cop in Duluth



Share a cup of Joe or maybe a story or a concern with a Gwinnett County police officer at Coffee with a Cop on **January 5** from 9:00am to 11:00am at the Chick-fil-A in Duluth.

The program, intended to break down barriers between police and the people they serve, allows the public to ask questions, discuss issues, and get to know each other a little.

The Chick-fil-A is located at 1570 Pleasant Hill Road in Duluth.

For more information, call 678.442.6504 or email Officer David Wood at David.D.Wood@gwinnettcountry.com.

Two Become One: Free mass wedding ceremony on 1-18-18 at Gwinnett Historic Courthouse

At exactly 1:18pm on **January 18, 2018**, a special mass wedding and vow renewal ceremony to celebrate the bicentennial will take place in the Superior Court Ballroom at the Gwinnett Historic Courthouse.



Chief Magistrate Kristina Hammer Blum and Probate Judge Christopher Ballar will perform the free "On 1-18-18...Two Become One" ceremony. Couples must provide a marriage license from a Georgia Probate Court; no out-of-state weddings will be performed. Each couple may bring a maximum of six guests.

Couples and their guests can celebrate with an exclusive reception in the ballroom for \$15 per person. The reception will include a DJ, first toast and dance, light refreshments, cake, and a ceremony keepsake.

Preregistration is required by **January 16** for both events; call 770.822.5450. The Gwinnett Historic Courthouse is located at 185 Crogan Street in Lawrenceville. For more information, visit www.gwinnettparks.com.

Take your Christmas tree to the Bring One for the Chipper event for environmentally smart disposal



Why dump your old Christmas tree by the side of the road when you can bring it to the annual Bring One for the Chipper event sponsored by Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful and Gwinnett County?

Natural Christmas trees can be left at designated sites in Gwinnett County through **January 15**. The trees will be chipped into mulch for use at County parks. Select fire stations will accept trees 24/7 and other locations will accept them during regular business hours. Recycling your Christmas tree keeps trees out of landfills by recycling them into mulch. This effort saves precious landfill space and provides an easy and environmentally conscious way to dispose of your old tree.

Visit www.gwinnettcg.org to see a list of all drop-off sites or register to volunteer for the chipping event scheduled for **January 27**.

Extension Office annual plant sale features fruits, landscaping

Gardeners and fresh-fruit lovers can order berry bushes and fruit trees as part of the UGA Extension Gwinnett office's famous annual plant sale through **March 21**. The plant experts are offering blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, figs, apples, pomegranate, Goji berries, azaleas, pecan trees, and other landscape plants in its annual sale. Pick up your prepaid order only on **March 29** at the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds in Lawrenceville. No orders are shipped. For order forms and plant sale information, visit www.ugaextension.org/gwinnett, or call 678.377.4010 to request a form.



Help shape the future of the county at the Gwinnett 2040 Unified Plan's first Open House on January 25



The time to exercise the most influence is while plans are being formed. Gwinnett County is in the early stages of crafting its 2040 Unified Plan, which will contemplate how land use, transportation, housing, and economic development can combine and work together in the County. This will include a short-term work program full of projects to implement the desires of the community as well as a broader long-term vision for the future.

Please join us at one of our upcoming community open houses to learn more about the purpose of the Unified Plan, review initial findings, and provide input that will be used to develop an overall vision for the future of the County.

The first of the community open houses is set for **January 25** from 5:00pm to 7:00pm at Five Forks Library, 2780 Five Forks Trickum Road, near Lawrenceville. There will be a variety of stations for people to learn about the plan plus a handful of interactive activities for folks to offer input on different topics.

Similar events are scheduled for: **January 29** at the Dacula branch of the Gwinnett Public Library; **February 1** at the Lilburn Activity Building; **February 12** at the Centerville library branch in Snellville; and **February 22** at Bogan Park in Buford.

The plan ultimately will be adopted in October by the Board of Commissioners and then sent to the Atlanta Regional Commission and the state Department of Community Affairs for approval.

To view other community open house opportunities or to learn more about the plan, visit www.Gwinnett2040UnifiedPlan.com or follow us on Facebook at Gwinnett2040UnifiedPlan. Have questions, email us at gwinnett2040@gwinnettcountry.com.

Gwinnett County Bicentennial Moment - Button Gwinnett, a biography



Gwinnett County is named for Button Gwinnett, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Gwinnett was born in 1735 in Gloucestershire in England near Wales. In 1765, he emigrated to the province of Georgia where he worked as a merchant, a cattleman, and a farmer. He was elected to the provincial legislature in 1769.

Gwinnett was elected to lead Georgia's Continental battalion in early 1776, but resigned to accept an appointment to the Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia. Lachlan McIntosh was named commander, and the two men became bitter rivals. Gwinnett, one of three delegates from Georgia to the Continental Congress, signed the Declaration of Independence in August.

In 1777, Gwinnett was elected speaker of the Georgia Provisional Congress and helped write the state Constitution. He continued to feud with McIntosh, and was appointed Georgia president and commander in chief. He urged an invasion of British Florida, which McIntosh opposed. The mission failed, and McIntosh and Gwinnett each blamed the other for the debacle. McIntosh harshly condemned Gwinnett, who challenged him to a duel. In the duel on May 16, 1777, both men were wounded but Gwinnett, shot in the leg, died of his injuries on May 19, 1777.

In 1848, the city of Augusta erected an obelisk to the three Georgia signers of the Declaration of Independence, and the remains of the other two were re-interred there. But when they opened

Gwinnett's grave in Savannah, the skeleton's leg bone was intact, indicating the body was not Gwinnett. No one knows where he is buried.

Gwinnett's signature is very valuable, primarily because it is so rare. One signature in 2012 sold for between \$700,000 and \$800,000.

gwinnettcounty
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