

Suwanee connects

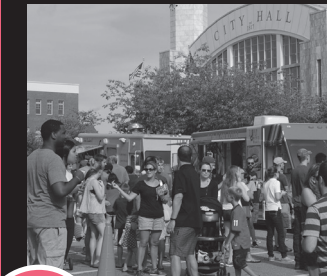
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this issue...

suwanee.com | february 2018

WE'RE #1

(In a few categories, anyway.)

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Receives
Top Marks
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National Citizen
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For more information on the National Citizen Survey, please see article of page 2.

City of Suwanee Receives Top Marks *again* from National Citizen Survey



In 2017, the City of Suwanee voluntarily participated in its fifth National Citizen Survey, a statistically valid survey managed by the National Research Center that gathers resident opinions across a range of issues. As in previous years, residents' ratings put the city at or near the top in a variety of areas as compared to other communities across the country.

"We always learn something about ourselves as a community through the National Citizen Survey, and it's gratifying that this year's results indicate that the City of Suwanee continues to be headed in the right direction," commented Mayor Jimmy Burnette.

The overall quality of life in Suwanee was rated as excellent or good by 92 percent of residents, and 95 percent rated the city as an excellent or good place to live and raise children. More than nine out of ten respondents rated the City's overall image and appearance positively with almost all reporting that they would recommend Suwanee as a place to live (97 percent).

In April the 2017 survey was sent to 1,500 randomly selected city addresses. The National Citizen Survey is endorsed by the International City/County Management Association and the National League of Cities.

"The depth and breadth of information that we obtain through the National Citizen Survey is extraordinary," said City Manager Marty Allen. "There's an old saying that if you don't keep score, you'll never know if you're winning or losing. We appreciate that our citizens took the time to report on their experiences with the City of Suwanee and that as a city and a community, it appears, we continue to do an outstanding job."

The full scorecard report – a summary of 42 characteristic and service areas (out of 125) which compares the National Research Center's database of resident opinions gathered from approximately 600 jurisdictions in the United States – can be found at Suwanee.com.

2018 Suwanee Fest Logo Design Contest

The City of Suwanee is looking for designers, artists, and creative people in general to submit logo designs for Suwanee Fest 2018. The designer of the winning logo will see his or her design on official festival t-shirts and marketing posters, as well as receive a \$500 prize.

The competition is open to professional and amateur designers of all ages. Designs may be hand-drawn or computer-generated. Entries should be submitted in printed and electronic format. **The deadline for submissions is April 13.** In celebration of the bicentennial

anniversary of the founding of Gwinnett County, this year's Suwanee Fest will have a vintage Americana theme. See SuwaneeFest.com for additional guidelines and an entry form.

Suwanee Fest is the City of Suwanee's annual two-day fall celebration scheduled for September 15 and 16. The award-winning festival includes arts and crafts exhibitors, children's rides and activities, and on-stage entertainment. Last year, approximately 55,000 people attended the festival at Town Center Park.

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New Events in 2018

That We're Super Excited About!



MAR 24

Young Musicians in the Park | 5:00 p.m.

Local high school students and members of the Tri-M Music Honor Society created this new event to showcase the talents of young high school musicians in the area. Event proceeds go to the Give a Note Foundation, which was created to strengthen music education opportunities for students across the country.

APR 14

Race to Cure Sarcoma Atlanta | 8:00 a.m.

The Sarcoma Foundation of America (SFA) has been producing Race to Cure Sarcoma events in cities across the United States, and has chosen Suwanee as the location for its inaugural Race to Cure Sarcoma™ Atlanta! This 5K Walk/Run is a family friendly event, with a goal to raise both awareness and resources for sarcoma research nationally.

APR 21

Race for the Rescues 5K & Fun Run | 8:00 a.m.

We're unleashing a brand-new pet-friendly event! Proceeds from this run benefit various animal rescue organizations across metro Atlanta. Man will receive a medal, and man's best friend will earn a bandanna – a paws-itively great time for you and your four-legged friend!

JUN 21

Suwanee Summer Porch Jam | 6:00 p.m.

Yes, June 21 IS on a Thursday, and yes, the date IS correct. The Suwanee Summer Porch Jam is part of Make Music Day – an international celebration of music! Launched in 1982 in France, it is held on the Summer Solstice every year in more than 750 cities in 120 countries. Summer Porch Jam (the first Make Music Day event in Georgia) will have the feel of an old-fashioned summer block party, featuring multiple venues and musicians throughout Old Town Suwanee.

AUG 18

Celebrate Gwinnett!

200 Years of Cultural Diversity | 10:00 a.m.

Join us in the park for music, food, and entertainment representing the many cultures of our community! Explore our rich multicultural history while also celebrating the bicentennial of the founding of Gwinnett County.

DEC 1

Happy Feat's Jingle in the Park | 8:00 a.m.

'Tis the season for holiday shopping! Join us as Town Center Park is transformed into a pop-up holiday market, full of unique handmade gifts and décor. Proceeds benefit Happy Feat, an organization that creates inclusive opportunities for the world to see that those with disabilities are beautiful, valuable, and capable.

RACES &

CONCERTS

& FESTIVALS

oh my!

Over 40 events – including numerous traditional favorites and several new events – are sprinkled throughout the City of Suwanee's 2018 event calendar. Each individual event brings anywhere from 300 to 55,000 participants to Town Center Park or other Suwanee locations, proving that Suwanee events offer something for everyone!



LIKE MUSIC?

- MAR 24** | Young Musicians in the Park
- MAY 25** | Red, White, Bluegrass, & Bach
- JUN 21** | Suwanee Summer Porch Jam
- JUL 27-28** | Broadway in the Park
- AUG 11** | August Concert & Wing Fest
- OCT 6** | Suwanee Jazz Fest

LIKE FESTIVALS?

- MAR 17** | Suwanee American Craft Beer Fest
- APR 14** | Glow in the Park
- MAY 5-6** | Star 94's Woofstock
- MAY 12** | Arts in the Park
- SEP 15-16** | Suwanee Fest
- SEP 29** | Happy Feat Happy Carnival
- OCT 20** | Alive! Festival
- NOV 3** | Suwanee Wine Fest

LIKE TO WALK OR RUN?

- FEB 10** | Suwanee's Sweetheart Sprint
- FEB 11** | Suwanee Half Marathon
- MAR 17** | Kiwanis Shamrock 5K
- MAR 24** | Georgia SPCA Run for the Rescues 5K
- APR 14** | Race to Cure Sarcoma
- APR 21** | Race for the Rescues 5K
- APR 28** | Gwinnett March for Babies
- MAY 19** | Great Strides Atlanta
- JUL 21** | Broadway in the Park 5K
- AUG 4** | Love Rolls
- AUG 25** | Hoofin for Habitat
- SEP 8** | Annandale Extra Mile
- OCT 20** | FUN Club 5K
- OCT 27** | Jonny & Xena Run
- NOV 10** | Kiwanis All-American 5K

LIKE TO EAT?

- MAY 4 • JUN 1** | Food Truck Friday
- AUG 3 • SEPT 7** | Food Truck Friday
- SATURDAYS** | Farmers Market
- MAY 12 - OCT 6** | Farmers Market

LIKE FAMILY-ORIENTED ACTIVITIES?

- OCT 13** | Taste of Suwanee
- NOV 10** | Peach State Chili Cook-Off
- 2ND SAT. OF THE MONTH** | Winter Farmers Market
- NOV - APR** | Winter Farmers Market
- APR 1** | Community Sunrise Service
- MAY 19** | Movies Under the Stars
- JUN 2** | B at the Movies
- JUL 21** | B at the Movies
- AUG 18** | Celebrate Gwinnett! 200 Years of Cultural Diversity
- OCT 28** | Trek or Treat
- NOV 11** | Suwanee Classic Car Show
- NOV 30** | Jolly Holly Day
- DEC 1** | Happy Feat's Jingle in the Park

For more information about the Suwanee 2018 events calendar, please visit SuwaneeFest.com.



Eat, Drink,
& Be Irish!

THE EIGHTH ANNUAL SUWANEES
AMERICAN CRAFT BEER FEST
RETURNS TO TOWN CENTER PARK ON
MARCH 17 FROM 1-5 P.M.

Recognized as one of the biggest and best craft beer festivals in the Southeast, Beer Fest features unlimited samples of more than 350 craft beers — more than enough to sate the appetite of thirsty hopheads. The beer selection will have something for everyone and ranges from hard-to-find seasonals to perennial favorites, as well as local brews mingling with national breweries.

While Suwanee Beer Fest has always taken place around St. Patrick's Day, 2018 marks the first year the festival will take place on the actual holiday! In keeping with the spirit of St. Patrick's Day, the event will feature a performance by the Drake School of Irish Dance and the sweet sounds of bagpipes, as well as a home brew competition.

Tickets are available for purchase at SuwaneeBeerFest.com. General admission includes unlimited samples of craft beer, backyard games such as cornhole and giant Jenga, wine samples, and food for purchase from local restaurants and food trucks. The VIP Experience includes early entry to the fest (beginning at noon), rare and exclusive beers, access to a private dining and tasting area, food catered by Marlow's Tavern, and more. In addition to the St. Patrick's festivities, games, tasty brews and food, there will also be live music by Atlanta's favorite party band, The Geeks, and Joe Hall.

A portion of proceeds from the event will support Cooper's Crew, a Suwanee-based organization that provides funding for research and development to find a cure for childhood cancer, as well as scholarships for young men and women facing challenging circumstances.

LIKE BEER? LIKE PEOPLE? LIKE FUN?

It takes 200+ volunteers to make the Suwanee Beer Festival a success!
Visit SuwaneeBeerFest.com/volunteers for more info.

*Volunteers must be 21 years of age!

Meet the Architects of Some of Suwanee's Best Events!

Ever wonder how Suwanee's amazing events calendar comes together year after year? Take a little dive into the brains of our event masterminds, Events & Outreach Manager Amy Doherty and Events Coordinator Kim Towne:

HOW DID YOU SELECT THE EVENTS THAT WILL BE INCLUDED ON THE 2018 CALENDAR?

AMY: We receive and review nearly 30 applications for non-city-run events each year. We try to select the ones that add the most value to the quality of life for our Suwanee area residents, and also events that are fun and unique. Where else can you go in Suwanee to hang a hammock, read a book, exercise, watch a movie, hear a concert, buy some vegetables, and grab some grub from a food truck?

WHAT KIND OF PLANNING GOES INTO THESE EVENTS?


KIM: Most attendees don't see all of the logistics that go on behind the "event curtain" — securing portable toilets, coordinating constant trash pick-up, load-in and load-out craziness, and working with the police to make sure they're able to execute a great safety plan, among others. We also put a lot of thought into the placements of certain vendors, bathrooms, etc. We want each event to look unique and different, but also to not confuse people by moving things all over the park. Details are fully thought through, thought about again, and then thought through again.

AMY: For our private event planners (i.e., events not run by city staff), we host a training meeting so that they all get to hear our rules, guidelines, and best practices. Our goal is for attendees to not notice the difference between the private events and the city planned events. We just want everyone to come to the park and have a great time!

WHICH EVENT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT IN 2018?

KIM: I can't wait to see Glow in the Park come to life again in 2018. Last year, we thought we had a simple idea and were blown away by the number of folks who showed up to walk in the lantern parade! I can't wait to see how creative people get with making paper lanterns!

AMY: I'm excited to see Happy Feet's Jingle in the Park get off the ground this year. Christmas is one of my favorite times of year, and visiting holiday pop-up markets with friends is a favorite activity. Suwanee is ready for its own version and this organization is a great beneficiary of the event!



Police Body Cameras Protecting Both Sides of the Badge

In February of 2017, the Suwanee Police Department began equipping its patrol officers with body-worn cameras in an effort to improve transparency and enhance the credibility of police actions.

“Body cameras have emerged as a point of agreement between reform advocates and law enforcement officials,” said Suwanee Police Chief Mike Jones. “The cameras help ensure police officers are maintaining the values of our organization, while providing invaluable situational context.”

Body-worn cameras protect not only the officers, but the citizens they serve, improving behavior on both sides of the badge. A 2013 study by the University of Cambridge published in the *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* revealed that both police use-of-force and citizen complaints against the police were dramatically reduced by the use of body cameras.

Results from a year-long study by the University of South Florida regarding a body-worn camera pilot program at the Orlando Police Department reports that use-of-force incidents dropped 53 percent among officers with the cameras. Civilian complaints against those officers also

saw a 65 percent decline. The study showed significant reductions in the number of civilian injuries by officers wearing body cameras, and of injuries to the officers themselves.

Body-worn cameras provide tangible benefits as well. Footage can be used as evidence and improves the accuracy of report writing, which equates to fewer cases going to trial and less time spent in court.

The body-worn cameras and dedicated server for storing video footage were paid for with capital funds. Suwanee police officers enable their body-worn cameras for any interaction with the public, excluding casual encounters.

“In an age where random cell phone videos go viral and help form public opinion, body cameras provide much-needed context for interactions,” said Chief Jones. “Body-worn cameras show the officer’s line-of-sight point of view – as opposed to the full reality of the situation – providing realistic information about the situation the officer was in at the time.”



Farmers AND Food Trucks

The City of Suwanee is in search of farmers, herb and flower growers, butchers, bakers, jams and soap makers, and others to participate in the 13th season of the city's Farmers Market, as well as food truck vendors for our very popular Food Truck Fridays.

FARMERS MARKET

The regular Suwanee Farmers Market will be open from 8 am-noon Saturdays, May 12 through October 6, at Town Center Park. The Winter Farmers Market is the second Saturday of the month from 9-11 am, November through April.

FOOD TRUCK FRIDAYS

Food Truck Fridays will return to Town Center on May 4, June 1, August 3, and September 7, with each month bringing great food and music from 5:30 pm to 9:30 pm.

Applications for both the Farmers Market and Food Truck Fridays are due on March 19, and can be found at Suwanee.com.



Let Suwanee Put Your ART on a LIMB

The City of Suwanee is seeking proposals and samples from artists willing to go out on a limb for the city's finders-keepers art-in-nature program.

A beloved Suwanee tradition, Art on a Limb is an award-winning, month-long program designed to celebrate and bring attention to the arts, as well as the natural beauty of the Suwanee parks and greenway. Since 2005, the city has hidden two pieces of original artwork daily throughout the month of May within City of Suwanee parks and along the greenway; those who find a piece of art get to keep it.

Past Art on a Limb pieces have included clay birds and orbs, small paintings on canvas, pieces of the City's old water tower, magnets, gourds painted to look like birds, the Suwanee S shaped from metal, and pottery pieces that include leaves found along the Greenway. This year, we're looking for something a bit more whimsical; think fairy doors, pot creatures, and the like.

Artistic proposals for this year's program will be accepted through February 23. Guidelines and an application are available a suwanee.com.



TOWN CENTER AVENUE NAMED *National* ‘MAIN STREET ACROSS AMERICA’

Town Center Avenue in Suwanee was chosen to represent the State of Georgia as one of this year’s Main Streets Across America, an annual list compiled by National Life Group.

Main Streets Across America is a celebration of streets in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia that play a central role in the communities in which they are located and have great stories to tell. The streets featured as part of Main Streets Across America exemplify the following attributes:

Award Winning!

The Orchard at White Street Park

All the hours of hard work put in by volunteers this spring, summer, and fall at the Orchard at White Street Park has paid off big time this winter – the Orchard is the recipient of not one, but TWO prestigious awards!

The Georgia Urban Forest Council recognized the Orchard at White Street Park as its 2017 Outstanding New Initiative, and Keep Georgia Beautiful chose the orchard for its 2017 Community Beautification award. The Orchard designer and super volunteers Roger and Brittany Grant were on-hand to accept the awards on behalf of the city.

“We’re so grateful to live in a community that has embraced this project and helped us to fulfill this dream,” said the Grants. “These awards are a reflection of the hard work from volunteers and city staff that made this park a reality.”

A fully functional orchard that is open to the public, the Orchard at White Street Park is the first of its kind in the Southeast. One facet of the long-term vision for Harvest Farm and the surrounding White Street Park was to provide a public orchard to enhance the community’s knowledge of gardening, local food sources, and the environment. Space for an orchard was programmed on the original 2009 master plan for White Street Park; the city completed construction on the second phase of the park (which includes the orchard) in 2017.

- A strong local business presence**
- Local gathering spots and community spaces**
- Celebrations of history and traditions**
- Diverse social and cultural activities**

“Being named the State of Georgia’s representative in the Main Streets Across American celebration is a fantastic honor, of which our community, downtown merchants, co-creators, and City Council should certainly be proud,” said Downtown & Business Development Manager Adam Edge. “It represents the outcome of their collective efforts, energies, and focus in creating a vibrant community gathering space, in which residents and guests can live well, play hard, and smile more.”

Winning Streak!

The City has been on a bit of a winning streak in 2017, hauling in nearly 20 awards and recognitions over the course of the year for its financial reporting, publications, events, performance management, and more.



- #3 on the list of Most Successful Cities in Georgia – Zippia
- Program of the Year – Hope Court, Georgia Municipal Court Clerks' Council
- Best of Family Fun Winner – Best Playground for PlayTown Suwanee, by Atlanta Parent magazine
- #4 Best Suburb in Georgia – Niche.com
- 100 Most Genius Places in America list – Time magazine
- Best New Event – Silver, for Guess Who's Coming to Cocktails, Southeast Festivals & Events Association
- Best Event Video – Silver, for Guess Who's Coming to Cocktails, Southeast Festivals & Events Association
- Best Print Ad – Bronze, for Guess Who's Coming to Cocktails, Southeast Festivals & Events Association
- Most Creative Idea – Bronze, for Suwanee Youth Leaders/ Suwanee Fest Transportation Collaboration, Southeast Festivals & Events Association
- IMPACT Hospitality Award – Gwinnett Chamber
- Certificate of Distinction for Superior Performance Management – International City/County Management Association
- Popular Annual Financial Reporting Award – Government Finance Officers Association
- Excellence in Financial Reporting – Government Finance Officers Association
- Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for fiscal year 2017 budget – Government Finance Officers Association
- AAA Bond Rating – Standard & Poor
- Main Street Across America – Town Center Avenue, National Life Group
- Bronze Workplace Health Achievement – SWELL Program, American Heart Association
- Best in Show – 2015 Annual Report, PIAG Print Excellence Awards
- Award of Recognition – 2015 Annual Report, Premier Print Awards International Print Competition
- 2017 Outstanding New Initiative – The Orchard at White Street Park, Georgia Urban Forest Council Award
- 2017 Community Beautification Award – The Orchard at White Street Park, Keep Georgia Beautiful
- National Main Street Across America – Town Center Avenue, National Life Group
- 2017 Crown Community Award, American City & County

City of Suwanee Named a 2017 Crown Community

The City of Suwanee has been named a 2017 Crown Community by *American City & County* magazine for its work on the Orchard at White Street Park.

Suwanee funded the \$183,471 project using special purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST) funds. Citizen and landscape architect Roger Grant and his firm, Columbia Engineering, donated 200 hours of design and work, at an estimated value of \$22,000. Moving forward, the city will give an annual \$1,000 to the orchard's management committee, and its public works department will handle ongoing maintenance, which will involve organic pesticides.

Since 1909, *American City & County* has recognized local governments for extraordinary work in their communities. The magazine received applications from cities and counties across the U.S. and recognized six innovative and impactful local government projects in 2017, choosing projects with meaningful issues, clever solutions, innovative implementation, measurable results, and ultimately replicable ideas.



Special Delivery

Suwanee Police Officer Reunited with Baby He Delivered on Interstate – 20 Years Ago



Off-duty Suwanee Police Officer Elton Hassell was lucky to be stuck in a traffic jam on I-85 in July 1997 – or rather, Yelsin Vazquez was lucky.

Hassell – then a Gwinnett County Corrections Officer – noticed a panicked man standing next to his car, screaming. Hassell exited his car to see if he could help, peered into the car, and found a woman in labor.

“I looked down and I saw part of a head and a full head of hair,” said Hassell.

Hassell had never assisted in a birth before, but there's a first time for everything. He had also never saved a life before.

“The cord was wrapped around his neck and his lips and face were blue,” Hassell said.

Officer Hassell unwrapped the cord, waited for paramedics to arrive, and then went on his way. Twenty years later, he received a call from Jennifer Vazquez, wife of Yelsin Vazquez, the baby whose life he has saved. The Vazquez family – including Yelsin's own daughter – made the trip to Suwanee in December to meet Officer Hassell and say thank you for being stuck in that traffic jam that fateful night.

Welcome to City Hall

The Suwanee Police Department recently welcomed the following new officers:

New Communications Officer **Ashley Kessler** is a recent graduate from the University of North Georgia. Ashley previously interned with the department before being offered a full-time position. She grew up in Covington, but now calls Gainesville home.

Formerly of the Hall County Sheriff's Office and United States Marine Corps, Officer **Tylon Johnson** lives in Jefferson with his wife and three daughters. When not keeping Suwanee safe, he enjoys wood working and playing the guitar.

Officer **Court Whitten** is a former member of the United States Army, Gwinnett County Police Department, and the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office. He has been married to his wife, a retired GCPS middle school teacher, for 25 years. Court enjoys tennis, the beach, watching Georgia football, and is a certified barbeque judge and competitor.

Officer **Todd Cribbs** also joins us from the Dekalb County Sheriff's Office. Married with two cats and a dog, Todd spends his free time cheering on the Atlanta Falcons and Chicago Cubs, as well as riding his motorcycle.

Congratulations!

The Suwanee Police Department is proud to announce the promotions of officers **Devin Snapp** and **Clint Latham**. Be sure to congratulate Corporal Snapp and Corporal Latham when you see them out in the community!



connections

Open for business

The following companies received new business licenses from the City of Suwanee in October, November, and December:

- **Aegean Salon Décor Inc.**
450 Satellite Boulevard
- **Angel Nails & Spa**
80 Horizon Drive
- **Clear Life Family Chiropractic**
1500 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard
- **Clips Café Salon**
1500 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard
- **Coded Atelier & Events**
95 Crestridge Drive
- **E-Pharm LLC**
1255 Buford Highway
- **Explicit Styles Salon**
1500 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard
- **Famous Toastery**
1120 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard
- **Fuse Hair Studios**
3230 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- **Golden Wok**
3255 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- **High Tech Associates**
4581 Tench Road
- **ICRA Solutions LLC**
1000 McGinnis Park Court
- **J & J Education L.P.**
3580 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- **Prime Communications LP**
3230 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- **YAS Performance**
4411 Suwanee Dam Road

upcoming events

official newsletter of the city of suwanee, georgia

F February

6	Planning Commission	6:30P
7	Public Arts Commission	6:00P
10	Winter Farmers Market	9:00A
10	Suwanee's Sweetheart Sprint	10:00A
11	Suwanee Half Marathon	7:00A
12	Suwanee Fest Planning Committee	6:30P
13	Harvest Farm Board Meeting	5:00P
15	City Council Workshop	5:30P
20	Downtown Development Authority	7:30A
20	Zoning Board of Appeals	6:30P
27	City Council Workshop	6:30P

M March

6	Planning Commission	6:30P
7	Public Arts Commission	6:00P
10	Winter Farmers Market	9:00A
12	Suwanee Fest Planning Committee	6:30P
13	Harvest Farm Board Meeting	5:00P
17	Kiwanis Shamrock 5K	8:00A
17	Suwanee American Craft Beer Fest	12:00P
20	Downtown Development Authority	7:30A
20	Zoning Board of Appeals	6:30P
24	Georgia SPCA Run for the Rescues 5K	8:00A
24	Young Musicians in the Park	5:00P

**City of
Suwanee
Georgia**

MAYOR Jimmy Burnette 770/945-3492
COUNCIL Dan Foster 678/404-9641
Dick Goodman 678/446-7520
Beth Hilscher 678/546-3388
Doug Ireland 770/265-0880
Linnea Miller 678/592-4150

CITY MANAGER Marty Allen 770/945-8996
POLICE CHIEF Mike Jones 770/945-8995
EDITOR Abby Wilkerson 770/945-3386

Unless otherwise noted, City of Suwanee public meetings are at
City Hall, 330 Town Center Avenue.
Dates subject to change; check suwanee.com for updates.