

Suwanee connects

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Santa to meet with good girls and boys in Suwanee Dec. 4

Santa Claus is set to arrive in Suwanee at 6:30 p.m. Friday, December 4, at Town Center Park. As part of festivities at Suwanee's Jolly Holly-day event, Santa will magically light Suwanee's Christmas tree, listen to wishes, and take photos with good girls and boys.

Choruses from Level Creek, Riverside, Roberts, and Suwanee elementary schools will perform some of the season's favorite tunes while performers from the Suwanee Academy of the Arts and Royal Dance Academy also will serve up some jammin' jingles.

In a break from previous years' tradition, Santa Claus will magically arrive at the beginning of the holiday event and then will meet with children and families while performances continue onstage. Parents, be sure to bring cameras or phones to snap your own free photos.

Free hot chocolate, cookies, and s'mores will be served while supplies last.



Mixed-use project to extend Town Center



The City of Suwanee Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is poised to enter into contract with developer Terwilliger-Pappas to create a \$46 million mixed-use multifamily/retail building at Chicago Street and Buford Highway adjacent to Town Center. The proposed development on an approximately 3.5-acre tract is expected to feature a five-story structure with 10,000 square feet of street-level commercial/retail/restaurant space and 235 high-end apartments. The project also is expected to include a parking garage around which the mixed-use structure will be built.

“The City of Suwanee DDA is pursuing an exciting public-private partnership that will extend our incredible Town Center,” says Mayor Jimmy Burnette. “This project will bring more residents, commercial opportunities, and energy to Town Center’s vibrant ‘live, work, play’ lifestyle. This will be a win for all of us.”

Town Center has some of the highest property values in the county. We believe that this project will not just contribute to, but enhance, Town Center’s value.”

The contract is expected to stipulate that Suwanee’s DDA will receive \$600,000 in cash for the 3.5-acre property plus ownership, at no additional cost, of the 10,000 square feet of commercial/retail space. The approximately 3.5-acre property being purchased by Terwilliger-Pappas was acquired over time for \$497,000.

This upcoming project was featured in October at Partnership Gwinnett’s annual Redevelopment Forum. Jimmy Baugnon, division executive with Terwilliger-Pappas, presented at the forum, which showcases exciting projects and the region’s vision for redevelopment.

The primarily one- and two-bedroom residences that are part of the project are expected to appeal to professional millennials and empty-nesters and would further the City’s efforts to be a lifelong community. “We fully expect that these apartments will set the bar for quality in Gwinnett County,” says Suwanee’s Downtown and Business Development Manager Adam Edge, “and that lease rates will exceed those of any similar existing Gwinnett County development. Studies have shown that





The new development will have a similar look and feel to the current Town Center area and will employ first-class building materials and architecture and offer top-quality amenities. City Manager Marty Allen notes that previous master plans, dating back to the 2002 Old Town Master Plan and including the recently completed 2015 Downtown Suwanee Master Plan Update, which provided several

opportunities, have created a vision for this property that includes mixed-use and multifamily units and complements the existing Town Center.

Developed from 2003-2009, Suwanee Town Center has won numerous planning awards, including the prestigious Atlanta Regional Commission's Development of Excellence Award in 2009.

"We have a proven track record with Town Center of master planning our vision and then working with the private sector to implement that vision," says Allen. "People are always asking when we're going to extend Town Center. We're confident that this project will add depth and energy that not only physically extends Town Center but also further enhances the Town Center experience. We're pleased that Terwilliger-Pappas is as committed to quality development as is the City of Suwanee."

The project, adds Allen, addresses several goals in the 20/20 Vision strategic plan, including extending Town Center, ensuring lifetime housing, and promoting a mixture of housing types.

With the local economy rebounding and plans for reconstruction of Buford Highway moving forward, the City has received increased interest recently in creating a compatible, high-quality development around Town

Center. In June, the Suwanee DDA issued a request for proposals for development of the Chicago Avenue tract. Three proposals were received, and the DDA visited two representative sites as part of the proposal assessment process before selecting Terwilliger-Pappas.

Elements of the Terwilliger-Pappas proposal include:

- a single, five-story, mixed-use building wrapped around structured parking
- 10,000 square feet of commercial/retail/restaurant space fronting Buford Highway
- compatibility with Town Center's look and form
- about 520 structured public and private parking spaces, some of which may be used for community events
- 235 upscale apartments
- residential units that are constructed in a manner that may allow for conversion to condominiums in the future
- predominantly one- and two-bedroom units
- anticipated monthly average residential rent of \$1,568.

Atlanta-based Terwilliger-Pappas specializes in Class A multifamily and mixed-use projects. Terwilliger-Pappas principals have developed more than 300,000 multifamily homes and executed more than \$1 billion in completed projects. The company, which anticipates investing about \$46 million in the Town Center project, currently has projects underway in Atlanta, Charlotte, Raleigh, and Nashville. Construction on the Town Center project, to be developed under Terwilliger-Pappas' Solis brand, will likely begin sometime late in 2016 and will take 20 or more months to complete.

We have a proven track record with Town Center of master planning our vision and then working with the private sector to implement that vision.

-Marty Allen, City Manager

THE
BLACK & WHITE
EVENT

GUESS WHO'S
COMING
TO
cocktails?

Artful party
to put the
chic in
fundraising

Mark your calendars now for *the* Suwanee social event of 2016:

Guess Who's Coming to Cocktails will be hosted at Town Center March 5. A local group of volunteers are organizing an event where all of the swankiest, hippest, best dressed of Suwanee will be seen. This black and white-themed party is a fundraising event to support public art in Suwanee. And they're not the only ones.

Part of the intrigue of the event, says Public Arts Commission member Cherie Heringer, is that party-goers will have an opportunity to brush elbows with mystery guests – perhaps a famous artist or writer, a well-known politician or athlete, or a creative chef. “It could be anybody,” says Heringer, “hence the event title, Guess Who's Coming to Cocktails. Of course, we hope that lots of area residents will join us for cocktails and for this fun opportunity to support the arts.”

Heringer is planning the black tie-optional event along with other friends of the arts community leaders, including Sheila Crumrine and Heather Thomas. Suwanee-themed cocktails (Suwanee Sippers and Town Center Toddies) are expected to be available along with hors d'oeuvres, music, dancing, and a North Gwinnett Arts Association exhibition and sale. “This is going to be a true grown-up, ‘find the right shoes and dress kind of affair,’” notes Heringer.

Reserved tables for six are available for \$1,200, while individual tickets are available for \$100. Other arts patronage levels range from \$5,000-\$20,000 with increasing sponsor benefits. Visit SuwaneeGuessWhosComing.com for more information and to purchase tickets.

“Public art has become such a part of the fabric of our community,” says Heringer. “We wanted to create an annual event to celebrate the arts and to encourage residents to continue to support public art, not just financially, although we need that, but also to get more people involved in the arts.”

Funds raised through the Guess Who's Coming to Cocktails event will be used to implement a public art project in the community – tentatively, a project in the pedestrian tunnel beneath the railroad tracks or a project that incorporates a large scrap of the old Gwinnett County water towers.

“This event,” says Heringer, “will give people an opportunity to get dressed up, enjoy an evening out, and see art and take it home as well as meet some new, interesting people who are on board for a fun cause.”



SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY,
MARCH 5, 2016
AT 6:30PM-10:00PM

THE
BLACK & WHITE
EVENT

GUESS WHO'S
COMING
TO
cocktails?

BLACK TIE OPTIONAL

SUPPORTING PUBLIC ARTS
IN OUR COMMUNITY

SUWANEE CITY HALL
330 TOWN CENTER AVENUE
SUWANEE, GA 30024

SUWANEEGUESSWHOSCOMING.COM



Inside SYL 2015

Connects asked a few of the 59 students who participated in the 2015 Suwanee Youth Leaders program to reflect on their experience. Here's what they had to say....

Youthful leadership

Applications for the 2016 Suwanee Youth Leaders (SYL) program, an eight-month City of Suwanee leadership program for high school sophomores and juniors, are being accepted through December 4. Applications are available through local high schools and at suwanee.com.

Now in its third year, SYL is open to students who live in the North Gwinnett, Peachtree Ridge, and Collins Hill clusters. The program centers on civic involvement, leadership skills, and volunteer opportunities.

The 2016 SYL program will kick off with a required two-day retreat on February 27 and 28. Students will then meet one Saturday each month March through September and also will be expected to volunteer at several community events, which may include the August concert, two Food Truck Friday events, Suwanee Fest, and Arts in the Park.

For more information about SYL, contact Adam Edge at aedge@suwanee.com or Denise Brinson at denise@suwanee.com

**Dami Lee, senior at
North Gwinnett High School**

"If not you, then who?" From day one, [SYL program managers] Denise [Brinson] and Adam [Edge]'s question resonated in my head, and it has truly influenced my outlook on what it means to be a member of the community.

At the start of the Suwanee Youth Leaders program, I signed up to be part of the Food Truck Friday committee. Surprisingly, Adam and Denise gave us a lot of freedom to plan the activities and layout for the event. Through this experience, I gained important life skills that helped me mature as a person. Time management, communication, and teamwork were definitely the three biggest areas that I worked on, and though at times, things did not go our way, with hard work, our committee was able to successfully run Food Truck Friday. On that night, seeing families and friends enjoy an event that we worked so hard on was probably one of the best moments of the SYL program.

Through Suwanee Youth Leaders, I realized that young students like us have the power to do great things for the community.

**Katie Reynolds, junior at
Hebron Christian Academy**

Suwanee Youth Leaders was by far one of the best experiences I've ever had. The sense of community that formed between all the members of SYL was incredible. We were all working for similar goals that sprouted out of a similar love for the City we lived in. I made so many new friendships that I know will last even though the program is over. I also learned that the best leaders lead by serving others and working for the public good.

Working several events around Suwanee, I got to see many leaders in action. I was amazed at how dedicated all the leaders were. They didn't simply manage and tell people what [to] do, they were leading by serving everyone around them and aiding in the hard work. After all,

good leaders take initiative and don't wait for someone else to get the job done.

**Grecia Alvarado, senior at
Peachtree Ridge High School**

Before coming into SYL, I did not realize how immense an imprint it was going to leave on me. Suwanee Youth Leaders not only opens your eyes to a whole different perspective in life, but it changes you for the better. When walking into an SYL meeting for the first time, the atmosphere is something completely different. It's literally a place where everyone accepts you for the way you are and won't think of you any differently.

**Bailey Knapp, junior at
Collins Hill High School**

[I] wanted to be in this club for college resumés and maybe to learn a thing or two. SYL is so much more than that, though. It taught me about how to better our community even as a 15-year-old still in high school. One thing they taught me was to make our City more interesting....They told us: "Why would you ever want to live in a dull, boring city" and they are right. Come up with any idea you think of and present it. So what if it gets turned down? Show it to someone else and always try to improve the place you love and live in. Do not give up because if you aren't the one trying to make Suwanee beautiful, then who is?



Bond refinancing will save about \$180K

With authorization from the Suwanee Urban Redevelopment Agency, the City of Suwanee was scheduled to close this month on an agreement with JP Morgan Chase to refinance 2006 revenue bonds that were used to help fund construction of Suwanee City Hall. The City owes about \$4 million on the original \$6.5 million bonds and, through refinancing at an interest rate of 1.94%, will save approximately \$180,000, or about 4.65 percent, across the 11-year payment period that remains.

JP Morgan Chase offered the City a 1.94% fixed interest rate. The original interest rate on the bonds was 3.5%.

“The City’s debt policy requires that, unless terms are changed, a savings of at least 3% must be realized in order to refinance debt,” says Financial Services Director Amie Sakmar. “Suwanee’s strong financial position – we have a AAA bond rating from Standard & Poor’s – make us a good investment, and market conditions and low interest rates make this a good time to refinance. Premier financial institutions like JP Morgan Chase want to partner with us because we’re a secure bet.”

The City of Suwanee also has about \$13 million in general obligation bonds (remaining from \$17.7 million in bonds that were originally issued in 2002), which were used to acquire open space and build parks. The City refinanced those bonds in 2006 and cannot, according to IRS rules, refinance again within a 10-year period.



photo courtesy of Karl Lamb



13.1 miles of running FUN

You can do this! On Saturday, January 30, the second annual Suwanee Gateway Half Marathon will take off from Town Center Park, meander through Old Town and up Peachtree Industrial, wind along the Suwanee Creek Greenway, and take you up and back Northolt Parkway. You’ll finish spectacularly – or maybe just finally – at Town Center.

Presented by Georgia Fitness, this Peachtree Road Race qualifier will begin at 7:30 a.m. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top three male and female finishers.

Additional race information is available at runsuwanee.com, and registration is open at active.com. The race fee is \$65. You may want to register early as the race will be capped at 600 runners and the fee increases to \$85 on December 14. Race-day registration will not be available.

“We had a very successful inaugural event last year,” says Georgia Fitness’s Jason Vance. “We’re looking forward to another great run. It’s exciting to us to pull the local running community together in this way that is both fun and challenging.”

The race course is, in parts, historic, scenic, and challenging. The elevation gain throughout the race is 613.5 feet.



photo courtesy of Karl Lamb

2016 event applications due Dec. 11

The City of Suwanee is currently accepting applications for community events to be hosted at City of Suwanee parks during 2016. The deadline for applications is December 11. Once the City's event schedule is approved after the first of the year, no additional events may be added.

Each year, the City of Suwanee hosts, primarily at Town Center Park, more than 40 City- and privately planned events, including concerts, festivals, races, food truck events, and more.

"Events are an important part of community-building in Suwanee," says Events Manager Amy Doherty. "Each year, we love partnering with community organizations to bring great music, fun events, and unique engagement opportunities to our residents and others."

Guidelines and applications are available at suwanee.com. Tips for hosting 5k and 10K races are also posted online. Please note that application submission does not constitute event approval.



Plot a healthier, fresher 2016

Applications for plots at Suwanee's Harvest Farm organic community garden are now being accepted for 2016. The online application is available at harvestfarmsuwanee.com.

Garden plots are assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis with priority given to City residents, property owners, and taxpayers as well as returning gardeners.

Plots are available in three different sizes, with the annual fee ranging from \$50-\$100. City of Suwanee residents/taxpayers receive a 25 percent discount.

Annual fees include use of a raised bed, utilities, basic community tools, social and educational events, and, when available, compost. Gardeners incur personal expenses for items such as seeds, plants, amendments, stakes, and trellises.





photo courtesy of Scott Quady

Suwannee Fest 'one of the best'

The 2015 celebration of Suwannee Fest was warm and sunny – and the weather was great, too.

More than 50,000 people ventured to Town Center Park the weekend of September 19-20 to partake in the annual community celebration. Folks that we spoke with were impressed by the high quality of the entertainment line-up, had snagged some inspirational pieces of jewelry and artwork, and were looking forward to sampling the food and getting their faces painted.

“There are a lot of entertainers, a lot of food, a lot of vendors, and a lot of friendly people,” said Makaila Hendricks, who was visiting from Lawrenceville.

“It’s a fun thing to do with your family,” added Marantha Burgess, of Lilburn, who was at the festival with her husband and two children.

And Valerie Stiles of Johns Creek simply said: “Suwannee Fest is one of the best!”

Once again this year, the approximately 200 festival volunteers received rave reviews and heartfelt thanks.



“Volunteers way exceeded my expectations for sure,” noted exhibitor JoEllyn Robinson with Southern Sass Design.

Exhibitors who were stand-outs in the Best of Show competition this year included:

- BJeveled – 1st place
- GoSwing and Grapevine Wall – 2nd place (tie)
- Hanalei Bath – 3rd place
- Whitney Orthodontics – sponsor

Among the winners in the “For the Love of Suwannee”-themed parade were:

- Best of Show - All-Star Performing Arts Academy
- Cub Scout Pack 518 – Most Creative
- North Gwinnett Middle School Orchestra, Collins Hill High School Dance – Most Entertaining (tie)
- Shadowbrook Baptist Church – Best Reflection of Theme
- Peachtree Ridge Robotics Team – Most Innovative

Next year’s Suwannee Fest will take place September 17 and 18. Mark your calendars now!





for business

The following companies received new business licenses from the City of Suwanee in August and September.

• **A&D Auto Brokers**
4411 Suwanee Dam Road

• **GA Hydro Supply**
3550 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road

• **Ready Fitness**
450 Satellite Boulevard

• **Best Engineering Group**
130 Satellite Boulevard

• **Hewlett-Packard Enterprise Company**
120 Satellite Boulevard

• **Real Estate Expert Advisors**
425 Buford Highway

• **Blessing Life Care**
3255 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road

• **Holy Gemstone**
1300 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard

• **Rugby Architectural Building Products**
4103 Tench Road

• **BP Quick Shop**
500 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard

• **Kenney & Medina**
3302 McGinnis Ferry Road

• **Sign Tech**
1018 Industrial Boulevard

• **Café Crepes Square**
80 Horizon Drive

• **Kimberly Skin Care, Nails & Spa**
1145 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard

• **The Terraces at Suwanee Gateway**
480 Northolt Parkway

• **Courtesy Emissions**
3154 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road

• **LEB Truck & Equipment**
425 Sharon Industrial Way

• **Thrive Salon**
335 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard

• **Cricket Wireless**
2855 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road

• **PODS Enterprises**
485 Horizon Drive

• **West Notifications**
300 Satellite Boulevard

• **Faith Academy**
1300 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard

• **Product Service**
470 Satellite Boulevard

• **Fast MD**
3473 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road

• **Frost Cummings Tidwell Group**
345 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard



Welcome to City Hall

Several new employees have come on board recently at the City of Suwanee.

Police Officer **Eric Sneed**, a 2013 graduate of Reinhardt Police Academy, joined the Suwanee Police Department in September. A Buford resident, Sneed previously was with the Marietta Police Department.

Crime Analyst **Kaitlyn Stewart** of Dacula came on board in October. She graduated with a bachelor's degree from Kennesaw State University and recently completed an internship with the Georgia Bureau of Investigations.

Melinda "Lindy" Hildebrand, of Loganville, also joined the police department in September as communications supervisor. Previously with Barrow County Communications, Hildebrand has more than four years' experience as a post-certified communications officer and specializes in terminal communications.

Andrew Busino came on board in the police department in August as a communications officer. A former captain with the Suwanee Police Explorers, Busino graduated with a 4.0 GPA from Georgia Gwinnett College, earning a bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

New administrative assistant **Nicole Schnepfer** will support several departments in City Hall as well as municipal court. A Winder resident, Schnepfer previously worked for Gwinnett County and has more than 10 years of administrative and court experience combined.

Additionally, Suwanee resident **Kie Sian Scibilia** has been promoted to Deputy Court Clerk. Scibilia has worked for Suwanee's Municipal Court for the past two years, serving as a part-time Administrative Secretary. Scibilia holds a master's of business administration degree from Mercer University.

Also in the municipal court, four new bailiffs have come on board:

- **Frederick Becker II** of Suwanee is a U.S. Army veteran with more than 37 years of law enforcement experience. He currently provides tactical training to the Norcross Police Department and has worked previously with the Governor's DUI Task Force, DeKalb County Police Department, Clayton County, and Atlanta Police Department.
- Also a Suwanee resident, **Jason Phillips** has worked as a security officer for more than seven years. He served in the U.S. Army Reserves as well.

connections

- Private investigator **Carson "Kendall" Smith** previously had an extensive career as a police officer with the City of Roswell and Forsyth County. He resides in Suwanee and has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Brenau University.
- Suwanee resident **Harriet Stephens** comes to the City with nine years' experience as a bailiff and detention officer with the Dougherty County Sheriff Department.



Four Ladies in Hats at the Lake by Carla Hoff

Got a photo that says a lot about Suwanee community?

Snap – and share – your photos of the Suwanee community through the City's annual **Snap Suwanee** photo competition. Guidelines and applications are available at suwanee.com. Each photographer may submit up to five photos; the deadline for submissions is December 31.

Photos submitted to the competition should represent the Suwanee community in some way and ideally be taken within the City of Suwanee limits. Winning photographs will be exhibited, beginning in March 2016, for an approximately one-year period at City Hall.

upcoming events

official newsletter of the city of suwanee, georgia

N November

- 7 Extra Mile Run/Walk (TCP) 8am
- 7 Suwanee Wine Fest (TCP) 1-5pm
- 8 Suwanee Classic Car Show (TCP) 10am-5pm
- 9 Harvest Farm Managing Board 5:00pm
- 17 Downtown Development Authority 7:30am
- 17 City Council Meeting 6:30pm
- 17 Zoning Board of Appeals 6:30pm
- 26&27 Holiday: City Hall Closed

D December

- 1 Planning Commission 6:30pm
- 2 Public Arts Commission 6pm
- 3 City Council Workshop 5:30pm
- 4 Suwanee's Jolly Holly-day (TCP) 6:30pm
- 14 Harvest Farm Managing Board 5:00pm

- 15 Downtown Development Authority 7:30am
- 15 City Council Meeting 6:30pm
- 15 Zoning Board of Appeals 6:30pm
- 24&25 Holiday: City Hall Closed

J January

- 1 Holiday: City Hall Closed
- 5 Planning Commission 6:30pm
- 6 Public Arts Commission 6pm
- 11 Harvest Farm Managing Board 5:00pm
- 11 Suwanee Fest Planning Committee 6:30pm
- 14 City Council Workshop 5:30pm
- 18 Holiday: City Hall Closed
- 19 Downtown Development Authority 7:30am
- 19 Zoning Board of Appeals 6:30pm
- 26 City Council Meeting 6:30pm
- 30 Suwanee Gateway Half Marathon 7:30am

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 Lynne Bohlman DeWilde 770/945-8996

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.