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• official newsletter of the city of suwanee, georgia

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Events



Play in the Dirt Again



suwanee.com | february2016

upcoming events

official newsletter of the city of suwanee, georgia

15 Zoning Board of Appeals

27 Community Sunrise Service

22 City Council Meeting

19 Suwanee Kiwanis Shamrock Run

19 Suwanee American Craft Beer Festival

26 Georgia SPCA Run for the Rescues 5K

February

March

1 Planning Commission

11 Suwanee Spring Fling

10 City Council Workshop

14 Harvest Farm Meeting

2 Public Arts Commission

5 Guess Who's Coming to Cocktails

14 Suwanee Fest Planning Committee

15 Downtown Development Authority

2	Planning Commission	6:30pm
3	Public Arts Commission	6:00pm
8	Harvest Farm Meeting	5:00pm
8	Suwanee Fest Planning Committee	6:30pm
11	City Council Workshop	5:30pm
13	Suwanee's Sweetheart Sprint	9:00am
19	Downtown Development Authority	7:30am
23	City Council Meeting	6:30pm

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1	Food Truck Friday	5:30pm
11	Harvest Farm Meeting	5:00pm
11	Suwanee Fest Planning Committee	6:30pm
12	Planning Commission	6:30pm
13	Public Arts Commission	6:00pm
14	City Council Workshop	5:30pm
16	SheMoves Atlanta Suwanee 5K	8:30am
16	Suwanee's Big Cheesy	4:00pm
19	Downtown Development Authority	7:30am
19	Zoning Board of Appeals	6:30pm
23	Spring into Color 5K Dash	9:00am
26	City Council Meeting	6:30pm
30	March of Dimes Gwinnett County Walk	9:00am

Art Suwanee Does it in Public

During the summer of 2007, City of Suwanee Assistant City Manager Denise Brinson took her family on a vacation out west. They flew into Denver, drove through the Black Hills of South Dakota, visited relatives in Montana, and trekked through Yellowstone National Park. At the end of the trip, Denise asked her children what they enjoyed the most. They talked about the "big rock" in downtown Boulder, the "cowboy statue" in front of a government building in Helena, and the "four arches made of deer antlers" that lead into the square in Jackson Hole. Of all the things that they could have recalled

> from those landmark locations, it was the public art that made the most significant impression.



Art is important and people (kids included) are affected by its presence, whether they consciously realize it or not. Suwanee mayor and lifetime resident Jimmy Burnette will be the first to tell you that, for the 50 years prior to the creation of Town Center, Suwanee was best known for two things: being home to the Atlanta Falcons and speed traps. It wasn't until Suwanee had an interesting "place," which included interesting "things," that the city started being recognized by national publications as a great place to live.

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City of Suwanee Georgia

MAYOR Jimmy Burnette 770/945-3492 **COUNCIL** Dan Foster 678/404-9641 678/446-7520 Dick Goodman Beth Hilscher 678/546-3388 Doug Ireland 770/265-0880 678/592-4150 **CITY MANAGER** Marty Allen **POLICE CHIEF** Mike Jones **EDITOR** Abby Wilkerson

770/945-8996 770/945-8995 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

Want to support the growing public art initiative in Suwanee?

Join us on March 5 at Guess Who's Coming to Cocktails!

"What was I thinking?" That's usually my final line when I tell folks the story about how I became editor of the City of Suwanee's newsletter in 1997 shortly after moving to the community. You see, I took on writing and editing the newsletter on a contract basis for a whopping \$50 an issue. Nearly 20 years later, I would argue that I received much more than the City did from that bargain.

A few years after becoming newsletter editor, I was hired by the City as its first public information officer, responsible for the newsletter, website, and two press releases/month. Eventually, my job became full time.

Over my tenure, Suwanee's newsletter had at least two significant design changes, a name change, and went from four pages to as many as 16 and from black and white to color (even if it was only one color at a time). Whatever it's name or format, the newsletter was my printed baby, and I jealously guarded its content, design, and who, other than me, was allowed to contribute an article.

Being newsletter editor afforded me a front-row seat to an incredible and exciting story. I got an up-close look as Suwanee transformed itself from a small town of about 7,000 with conflicted feelings about the enormous growth it was experiencing to a proud, vibrant community of 17,000 that serves as a national role model for how to manage growth and enhance citizens' quality of life.

I witnessed the historic 2001 greenspace bond referendum that would provide \$17.7 million for parks and open space and then I got to watch as each of those new parks was planned and four of them opened within a nine-month period. I witnessed our vibrant Town Center emerge from what surely would have been a traditional suburban plaza. I saw awards come Suwanee's way, countless master plans further improve the community, public art pieces add color and interest, and concerts and festivals strengthen Suwanee's sense of community. I watched as Suwanee Day moved from Old Town to the new Town Center and carry on in 2004 (if a couple of hours late) despite a passing hurricane and a decade later as it became a rebranded two-day festival now known as Suwanee Fest. The best part about

"seeing" all of these things was that I got to share the story with you. Through the pages of the Crossroads/Connects newsletter, I was privileged to tell, in installments, Suwanee's amazing story as it was happening.

And now there is a new Connects editor. After 15.5 years as a City of Suwanee employee and about 18 as newsletter editor, I have accepted a position as communications and marketing manager with the Town of Vienna, Virginia. You're likely to notice some changes in how Connects reads and looks. And, you know what, Suwanee, that's a good thing.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring you Suwanee's story on a regular basis. It was such a privilege and an honor.

"the newsletter was my printed baby, and I jealously guarded its content, design, and who, other than me, was allowed to contribute an article."



Things were going great at my job. The workload was manageable, I was being given intriguing projects, and my coworkers were awesome. All in all, I was really quite happy.

And then, Suwanee Assistant City Manager Denise Brinson called. I knew her and her team from my work at the advertising and marketing firm that branded the Suwanee Gateway. She said that Lynne DeWilde was moving to Virginia, and that I should interview for her position. I was intrigued. Ecstatic when I actually got the job.

What was I thinking?

My predecessor is the person who quite literally created this job and all that went with it. You wouldn't believe me if I told you the number of people who informed me I had impossibly big shoes to fill. She essentially invented the job, did it to near perfection for nearly 16 years, and now I get to follow Springsteen on stage.

"the chance to be the "voice" of an awardwinning city that has been nationally recognizeď"

What was I thinking? I'll tell you what I was thinking.

I was thinking that opportunities like this don't come along every day. The chance to be the "voice" of an award-winning city that has been nationally recognized as an example of the right way to grow, prosper, and succeed.

I was thinking that I would not simply have a front row seat, but actually be in the press box; if I was really lucky, maybe even a spot in the film room. That I might have the fortuity to possibly make an impact on a community of 17,000 and counting.

I was thinking that I couldn't ask to inherit a better product. Some people are bequeathed

Enron, White Star Line, Lindsay Lohan. It's SUWANEE – per Kiplinger, the 3rd best place in the country to raise children. It's not like the City of [name redacted came calling.

I was thinking that I would be approximately 100 steps from Mellow Mushroom.

I was thinking that Suwanee is a vibrant, amazing community, known for being progressive and unafraid to try something new. And I want people to use those same adjectives to describe me.

So, yeah – I'm basically Joe Montana's back-up QB. But that was Steve Young, and things turned out okay for him.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring you Suwanee's continuing story on a regular basis. It is my privilege and honor, and I hope to do it justice.

Food, music, and fun highlight City's 2016 event calendar

Over 40 events, including 15 runs/walks, five Food Truck Fridays, numerous traditional favorites, and several new events, are sprinkled throughout the City of Suwanee's 2016 calendar. Each individual event brings anywhere from 300 to 55,000 participants to Town Center Park or other Suwanee locations.

On March 5, Suwanee debuts Guess Who's Coming to Cocktails, a black tie-optional ticketed event in support of the Suwanee public art initiative – a first for Suwanee, and one you won't want to miss!

"Public art has become such a part of the fabric of our community," says Public Arts Commission member Cherie 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 but through involvement as well."

Party-goers can look forward to cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, music, and dancing, plus an opportunity to brush elbows with mystery guests – possibly a prominent artist? Perhaps a renowned author? Perchance, a celebrated athlete?

"This event," says Heringer, "will give people an opportunity to get dressed up, enjoy an evening out, and see art and take it

RAR

home, as well as meet some new, interesting people who are on board for a fun cause."

Join the swankiest, hippest, and best dressed of Suwanee at this black-and-white, black-tie optional citizen volunteer-driven event! Visit **SuwaneeGuessWhosComing.com** to purchase tickets.

Suwanee's very popular Food Truck Fridays are back the first Friday of the month April-September, with the exception of July. Also back are favorites such as Suwanee Beer Fest on March 19, award-winning Suwanee's Big Cheesy on April 16, Woofstock on May 7, Arts in the Park on May 14, August concert & Wing Fest on August 13, and Suwanee Fest on September 17-18. The full calendar of new and returning events is available on the What's New/Events page at **Suwanee.com**.

New additions to the 2016 events calendar:

March 5 Guess Who's Coming to Cocktails?

September 11 Remembrance Day event

November 12 All-American 5K

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Repeating changes that were implemented last year, the Suwanee Farmers Market will be Saturdays from 8 amnoon Saturdays May through the first week in October. The Memorial Day weekend kick-off event will be celebrated as Red, White, Bluegrass & Bach, and all Movies under the Stars presentations – on June 4, July 23, and August 6 – will be double-features this year.





Suwanee Events By the Numbers

230+

Football fields covered by someone running the Suwanee Gateway Half Marathon 2000

Marshmallows
roasted on an open fire at
Jolly Holly-day

65.8

Miles rur

if you participated in all 15 run/walks offered this year

20,000

Meals served from Food Trucks

Hand-selected, premium wines from around the world that can be tasted at Suwanee Wine Fest

Hours of movies shown on the big screen at Movies Under the Stars

Colors you could be after completing the Spring Into Color 5K (pink, purple, blue, yellow, & green!)



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"You don't have to be lonely..."

Farmers Wanted for the 2015 Suwanee Farmers Market

The season of fresh produce, lovely flowers, and yummy baked goods returns to Suwanee when the City's Farmers Market opens on Saturday, May 7. The market is in search of farmers, herb and flower growers, butchers, bakers, jams and soap makers, and others to participate in its 12th season.

"The Suwanee Farmers Market has a loyal customer and farmer base," notes Suwanee Events Manager Amy Doherty. "Our market is almost as much a social event as it is an opportunity to access locally grown produce and a variety of other items, such as salsa, honey, eggs and meat, and baked goods."

The Suwanee Farmers Market does not accept arts and crafts, non-licensed products, or produce re-sold from other markets. Visit suwanee.com for additional guidelines and an application. Vendor applications are due March 25.

Vendors are required to attend the annual Farmers Market meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, March 21, at Suwanee City Hall, 330

5 Things to Know about the 2015 Suwanee Farmers Market

- Taste the Rainbow Produce doesn't come any fresher than a farmers market. No shipping, no gas-enhanced ripening, no storage – just fresh-off-the-vine goodness.
- Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food The teenage stock boy at the grocery store won't give you tips on how to cook the ingredients you buy, but the farmers and artisans at the farmers market are brimming with free advice.
- Speaking of what the farmer knows... Meeting and talking to farmers and food artisans is a great opportunity to learn more about how and where food is produced. Bonus: they usually give sample tastes.
- Buy Local When you buy local, a significant portion of your money is used to make purchases from other local businesses and services, strengthening the economic base of our community.
- Connect with Your Community "I love long strolls through the canned vegetable aisle"...said no one ever. The fresh, spring air and Georgia sunshine trump artificial lighting and canned music every time.



Town Center Avenue. In addition, all farmers may be subject to facility inspections by the market manager.

The Suwanee Farmers Market will be open from 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays, May through the first week in October, at Town Center Park.



Friends of Suwanee Luncheon

On Wednesday, December 9, the City hosted a 'Friends of Suwanee' luncheon at City Hall to celebrate the holiday season, as well as those who have worked so hard this year to grow and improve the Suwanee community. City Hall staff served lunch to volunteers and elected officials, as well as handed out awards to the following friends of Suwanee:

Downtown Suwanee Masterplan Advisory Committee

- Jimmy Burnette
- Aaron Brown
- Debra Bowen
- Chloe Camp
- James Davenport
- Patty Etherton
- Kathy Hedrick
- Beth Hilscher
- Anna Huthmaker
- Ted Krotz
- Travis Lanier
- Shine Lee

- Jeff Nalley
- Tim O'Brien
- Dave Patel
- Elvira Rogers
- Rob Rohloff
- Lisa Sanderson
- Liz Sawicki
- Joy Smith
- John Taliaferro
- Michael Williamson
- Aisha Yaqoob

Suwanee Public Art Master Plan Advisory Committee

- Caron Burnette
- Amy Bray
- Vicki Johnson
- Dick Goodman
- Roger Grant
- Cherie Heringer
- Jonathan Holmes
- Suzanne Holtkamp
- Matt Hyatt

We greatly appreciate everyone who served in 2015! Your commitment to your community has made lasting changes that will be felt for generations to come.

- Dion Jones
- Berney Kirkland
- Tia Lynn
- Linnea Miller
- Earl Mitchell
- Melanie Mollard
- Tim O'Brien
- Phil Proctor
- Lisa Winton







What's white with blue, green, pink, orange, red, and purple bubbles, and cheerful all over?

An old squad car headed for retirement was given new life and purpose, as well as a new look. Refurbished and wrapped using drug forfeiture money, the Suwanee Police Department's new Bubble Car has been making appearances at local schools and community events.

"I wanted to have a visual expression that would help our citizens see us as people they could approach. With all the negative media toward police, we needed something that would promote communication and positive relationships," said Suwanee Police Chief Mike Jones. "When we're in the Bubble Car, citizens will approach us to talk and take pictures. It is really fun to engage our citizens without the drama and stress."

Chief Jones hopes that the Bubble Car will encourage trust and strong relationships in the community, and reinforce the role of the police as protectors, rather than to be feared, especially with children. The hope is to break down the stigma that the police only arrive when something is wrong, and to build awareness and understanding of the many ways the police department protects and aids the community. By making the police more approachable, children develop a healthy perspective of the job of a local law enforcement officer and learn to trust and respect their local police officers.

"I love it! It's an outward expression of what I tell my five- and two-year-old children – that the police are our friends and they help people," said Suwanee City Councilman Doug Ireland. "It's a wonderful method of community outreach. But don't be fooled, it still has lights and sirens and the officers who drive it are equipped to deal with whatever situation might arise."

Don't worry, Suwanee citizens – this isn't the new "look" for the Suwanee PD. The Bubble Car is, and will remain, the only one of its kind.

Play in the Dirt Again

A few plots are still available at the Harvest Farm Community Garden for the 2016 growing season. The annual cost varies depending on the size of the plot; City of Suwanee residents/ taxpayers receive a 25 percent discount on plot fees. To register, visit the "Plots" page at harvestfarmsuwanee.com.

Harvest Farm is Georgia's largest organic community garden. The garden features 76 raised beds, which are all tended organically. Harvest Farm opened in April 2010 and is located in Suwanee's White Street Park, itself a former farm. With a mission of "Growing a Healthier Suwanee," Harvest Farm also serves as an educational resource for the community, offering classes and events related to gardening, organic living, sustainability, and other relevant topics. Harvest Farm is proud to support our surrounding community, donating both food and supplies to local food banks and other charitable organizations. Over the holiday season, Harvest Farm gardeners donated more than 300 cans of food to the Quinn House in Lawrenceville.

The Dirt on DIRT

- Certain types of bacteria naturally occurring in dirt activate neurons that produce serotonin, a chemical known to be a natural anti-depressant.
- Exposure to microbes in soil helps build immunity, especially in children.
- Positive electrons in the form of free radicals build up in our bodies; direct contact with the ground has been shown to balance as a negative grounding charge.

Girl Scouts Bring Butterflies Back to Suwanee

After eight months of planning, four work days, and countless hours of preparation, Girl Scout Troop 2440 has completed work at the Suwanee Harvest Farm, as well as the Sugar Hill community garden at Pirkle Park, towards a Bronze Award, the highest honor a Girl Scout Junior can achieve.

The eleven Scouts – all fourth and fifth graders at Riverside and Walnut Grove Elementary – worked for the better part of the last year, focusing on rehabilitating Harvest Farm's butterfly garden. The troop also created and installed folk art of the United States flag for both parks, after noticing that Scouts frequently hold ceremonies in these areas and that there was currently no flag present.

"We trimmed back some trees that had started behaving like bushes!" said Girl Scout Maya White.



Congratulations and thank you to Troop 2440, as well as Panache Gifts & Promotion for donating signage and Freeland Painting for donating paint for the service project.

The Suwanee American Craft Beer Fest is back for its sixth year, and is bigger and better than ever! On March 19, thousands of people will swarm Suwanee Town Center Park to drink their share of over 300 craft beers from breweries all over America! This award-winning festival has earned the reputation of being

Suwanee American Craft

Returns for the Sixth Year

The good news is that event organizers have realized they cannot possibly pack any more people into the park with the current layout. In an effort to continue to provide festival attendees with the best experience possible, the festival will now take over more of the park, meaning more room to roam, less crowd congestion, and shorter lines.

one of the biggest and best beer festivals in the South.

Many participating breweries use the experience as an opportunity to debut new or rare seasonal beers at the festival, as well as brewing some specifically for the VIP tent. The festival is also host to the largest home brew competition in the area – over 400 home brewers vied to be crowned "Best in Show" last year!

Looking for the true beer connoisseur experience? With exclusive, hard-to-find casks and specialty beers paired with delicious food such as cheese fondue and gourmet burgers cooked onsite, the VIP tent is not something to be missed for the true beer aficionados. Parking will be available on-site, but be sure to have a designated driver pick you up (or better yet – drop you off and pick you up!).

Tickets go on sale on February 5 at noon on www. suwaneebeerfest.com. Event organizers Veugeler Design Group are dedicated to giving back and supporting the community, and as tradition holds, will donate a large portion of the proceeds to a local charity. Visit suwaneebeerfest.com or follow "SuwaneeBeerFest" on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for news and updates.



Suwanee Beer Fest has become a sought-after event in the craft beer world and is truly a festival to warm any beer-lovers heart.

Saturday, March 19 Suwanee Town Center Park

VIP Admission: 12-5 pm General Admission: 1-5 pm

- Unlimited samples of 300+
 American craft beers
- Debut of new, seasonal and hard-to-find brews, including Irish beers in celebration of St. Patty's day
 - Cooking with beer demos
- Cornhole tournament and beer pong
 - Live music on the main stage

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

- 99 Cents Plus 3131 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- Academy of Kuchipudi Dance 4175 Silver Peak Parkway
- American Redemption 300 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard
- Ameridental Lab 95 Crestridge Drive
- Bon Bon 3131 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- Creative Consulting 3873 Davis Street
- Denny's 2925 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- Ellis Car Storage 3441 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- Eyelevel Suwanee Learning Center 525 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard
- Fortunate Ventures 88o Cotton Mill Place
- Georgia Commercial Installation 3850 Cheery Ridge Walk
- Green Basil 2855 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- HRM Family 4411 Suwanee Dam Road
- IHOP Restaurant 3463 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- Intown Suites 95 Celebration Drive
- IPS Products Global 4021 McGinnis Ferry Road
- J & MK Construction 3675 Martin Farm Road

- Kuraoka Clinic 4140 Moore Road
- Las Brasas Mex Grill 360 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard
- Lynkboard 3810 Beaverton Drive
- North East Georgia Myofascial Release Therapy

3479 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road

- Photobuzz Booth 4135 Stonecypher Road
- Qebaptore "A Bite of Europe" 315 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard
- Royal Cleaners 4325 Suwanee Dam Road
- Seva Suwanee #3462 3245 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- Shintec Engineering America Inc. 3635 Burnette Park Drive
- Smoothie King 3429 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- Southeast Mortgage of Georgia 3725 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- Sparks, King & Watts 790 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard
- Sports Clips 3429 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road

- Storgard Self Storage 345 Sawmill Drive
- Suwanee Bazaar 80 Horizon Drive
- Suwanee Diner 3103 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- Tailored Living of Gwinnett 3631 McGinnis Park Drive
- The Nail Shack 3580 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- The Pointe at Suwanee Station 1525 Station Center Boulevard
- Together Co. Nail Parlor 3550 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- Top Notch Contracting 185 Leaf Lake Drive
- Tropical Smoothie Café 3320 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- Twisted Shear 3725 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road
- Vapornauts, Inc. 1009 Industrial Court
- We 190 Bayswater Drive
- WKW Consulting Services 3912 Baluster Court

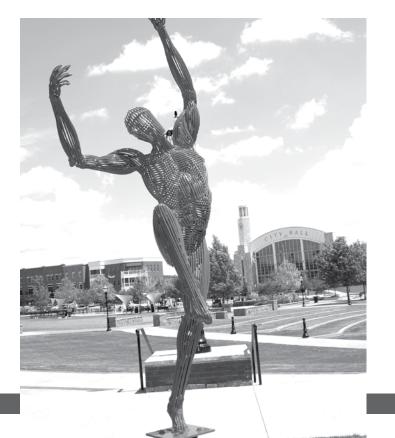


Suwanee Does It In Public continued from page 1

Public art has become an important piece of what Suwanee does, what Suwanee is, and how Suwanee is viewed by citizens, visitors and, increasingly, by the business community. Public art programs like Suwanee SculpTour, a walkable outdoor exhibit of more than 25 temporary and permanent art pieces displayed throughout downtown, are putting the city on the map.

Of course, Suwanee isn't the only city creating interesting experiences. In Gwinnett County, you can watch world-class stage shows at the Aurora Theater in Lawrenceville, listen to up-and-coming musicians at "Jazz in the Alley" in Norcross, or visit a funky artist colony at Tannery Row in Buford. This list goes on and on. These places, whether intentionally or organically, have found that the arts make them more interesting and engaging. In most cases, it's not by accident that they are focusing on the arts – they have simply figured out that the arts add real value to their communities.

Art can establish a community's identity. Can you imagine New Orleans without jazz? Chicago without the "Bean?" Or Paris without just about everything that makes it so great? These places – and so many more – are inextricably linked to their arts. It is impossible to separate these great cities from their art. Suwanee too has decided to strive to be a great place. Public art, in the public realm and for the whole of the community, is an integral piece of our overall strategy. It's not enough to simply create a "place." That place has to come alive – through art, events, activities, and just making things fun. People need a reason to keep coming back and connecting.



connections %



The staff of the City of Suwanee gathered at Suwanee Movie Tavern to celebrate its annual Employee THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10 | Recognition Night.

OVER 20 EMPLOYEES

were recognized by their peers at the event, including

