



From the Desk of

AMY DOHERTY

CITY OF SUWANEE EVENTS & OUTREACH MANAGER

WHY DOES SUWANEE DO EVENTS?

May 1984: Ronald Reagan is president. Wayne Gretzky leads the Edmonton Oilers to their first Stanley Cup title. People are jamming out to Prince's *When Doves Cry* and flocking to the theaters to see *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. And the citizens of Suwanee are attending Suwanee Day for the very first time.

Suwanee Day - now known as Suwanee Fest - began nearly 40 years ago as a one-day event on an open field next to the old city hall (which is now the court building, and the empty field became a fire station which eventually became a brewery. But that's another story.) Suwanee Day spent many years on Main Street at Burnette Rogers Pavilion until the creation of its current home - and home to 40+ events annually - in Town Center Park in 2004.

The events that we host in Suwanee serve multiple purposes. They create an opportunity for the community to come together and bring a fun quality of life to the residents. Events are a promotional tool for bringing visitors to our city, who in turn visit restaurants and shops, contribute to the local economy, and helped to establish Suwanee as a city with an active downtown. Events provide opportunities to build a sense of community, showcase local and regional talent, and enrich cultural opportunities.

Suwanee's events have received many regional and local awards for their creativity and stellar execution. These events have provided memories for young and old alike as well as establishing Suwanee as a desirable and reputable event venue. While the calendar is packed with fun, we are careful to NOT book every weekend to allow for passive time in the park as well.

Over the years, Suwanee's event calendar has grown into a mix of events planned and executed by the city, as well as many events organized by private event planners but hosted at Town Center Park. We partner with media

outlets and event partners who can bring dynamic events that are cost efficient and enjoyable. Events are carefully planned to allow for a variety of activities - mostly free but occasionally ticketed - that reflect the interests of the residents within the city limits as well as the larger Gwinnett community.

One of my favorite things to tell people is that I'm in the memory-making business. Suwanee events create life-long memories for our residents, as well as an opportunity to be proud of their community. I love meeting people who grew up in Suwanee, and can point to a specific moment tied to a Suwanee event that is a fun memory of growing up in their hometown. From walking in the Suwanee Fest parade with a scout troop to performing on stage with Broadway in the Park, singing with their elementary school choir at Jolly Holly Day to Saturday mornings at the Farmers Market with their families, we want to create memories that make people long to come home.

In her 16 years of employment with the City of Suwanee, Amy Doherty has produced over 500 community events. She serves as the Events & Outreach Manager in the Economic & Community Development department.

