



# Suwanee connects

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Summer  
Porch Jam



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Broadway says,  
"Bonjour!"



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Police Lieutenant  
Graduates Quantico

[suwanee.com](http://suwanee.com) | June 2023



## PLAY IT FORWARD 2023

### Suwanee Announces NEW Community-Build Playground

Over a five-day period in 2004, more than 1,000 community members helped build a community playground that came to be known as PlayTown Suwanee. Let's do it again!

Building upon the success of PlayTown Suwanee nearly 20 years ago, the city is excited to announce plans for a new community-build playground in the fall of 2023! The city has approved Leathers & Associates - the designer and project management team behind the original community build - to return to help modernize PlayTown Suwanee for a new generation.

"After 20 years of fun, PlayTown has reached the end of its planned service life," said Suwanee City Manager Marty Allen. "We explored rehabbing it, but ultimately it made even more sense to rebuild it with modern, durable materials and incorporate some new features."

The collective build experience offers a hands-on opportunity for citizens to give something tangible back to their community, resulting in a beautifully constructed, unique expression of shared pride.

The project team hosted design brainstorming sessions with the ultimate playground experts: kids! Representatives visited select classrooms in elementary schools within the city limits to gather ideas; children were also invited to submit their ideas via [Suwanee.com](http://Suwanee.com).

The custom-designed playground will be built in the same location and similarly sized as the original. It will be designed to meet modern standards for inclusivity and constructed from earth-friendly, recycled materials that are long lasting and virtually maintenance-free.

"Playground trends have come a long way in 20 years," said PlayTown project manager Kim Towne. "With the construction of Town Center on Main, this seemed like the perfect time to give our beloved PlayTown a much-needed facelift, while also providing a new generation of parents the opportunity to be involved in a truly impactful project."



PlayTown  
Suwanee v 2.0  
Build Dates:  
October 9-15,  
2023  
Weather permitting



# AWARD-WINNING

## CITY EMPLOYEES

The City of Suwanee staff gathered to celebrate and recognize some of its top employees for the year 2022. The following employees were nominated by their peers and recognized by City Manager Marty Allen for exemplary service:

### RESULTS CHAMPIONS

Champion of results and progress, recognized for achieving a monumental accomplishment in the past year.

**Officer David-Scott Dusten** - Police Department  
**Henry Harden** - Public Works Department



### TEAMWORK CHAMPIONS

Works behind the scenes to ensure everyone looks good and Team Suwanee can shine.

**Tammy Hiler** - Business & Finance Department  
**Luis Lopez** - Public Works Department



### STEWARDSHIP CHAMPIONS

Promotes logic, procedure, and safety so that projects and initiatives exhibit Suwanee quality and are successful.

**Officer Todd Pacholke** - Police Department  
**Elizabeth Reisner** - Municipal Court



### INNOVATION CHAMPIONS

Never satisfied with the status quo and always seeking to improve; a creative visionary.

**Ivan Loreda** - Public Works Department  
**Caleb Phillips** - Economic Development Department



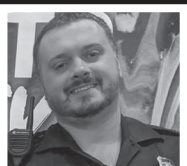
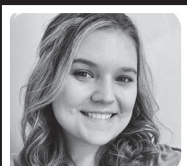
### CHAMPIONS OF THE PEOPLE

Understands that the actions and initiatives of Team Suwanee affect people and promotes it in his or her actions and influences others to do the same.

**Detective Kayla Medico** - Police Department  
**Michelle Hunter** - Human Resources Department



Several members of the Suwanee Police Department were recognized for outstanding work in 2022, including:



**Officer of the Year** - Officer Isaiyah Fernald

**Civilian of the Year** - Dispatcher Sydney Bishop

**Supervisor of the Year** - Sergeant Andrew Busino

**Lifesaving Award** - Officer Isaiyah Fernald

**Top Gun** - Sergeant Kevin Skinner

**Chief's Award** - Sergeant Kevin Skinner

## CONGRATULATIONS!

City of Suwanee employees celebrating significant anniversaries in 2023:

### 25 YEARS

Lt. Bryan Hickey  
 Chief Cass Mooney

### 20 YEARS

Kathy Jones

### 15 YEARS

Bill Barnes  
 Wendy Budd  
 Toni Hardy  
 Trinity Hsu  
 Sgt. Kevin Skinner  
 Susan VanNus

### 10 YEARS

Paul Bara  
 Juan Beltran  
 Sam Lauricella  
 Debbie Lund

### OTHER SIGNIFICANT MILESTONES

Lt. Dan Clark - 32 years

Lt. Matt Scott - 37 years

# CITY OF SUWANEE WINS FIVE SOUTHEASTERN FESTIVALS & EVENTS ASSOCIATION AWARDS

The Southeast Festivals and Events Association (SFEA) recognized the City of Suwanee's events with five Kaleidoscope Awards on February 21 at their annual conference in Myrtle Beach, SC.

The city took home **FIVE AWARDS**, including:



Designed to recognize the marketing, programming, and overall event, the SFEA Kaleidoscope Awards acknowledge the highest level of achievement in the festival and event industry throughout the southeast United States. Festivals and events from five states are recognized for originality, creativity, media impact, volunteer programs, and the overall impact to the community.

SFEA is a 501 (c)6 membership-based organization comprised of festival and event planners, venues, and industry service providers. SFEA was founded in 2009 to strengthen the festival and event industry throughout the southeast United States by hosting educational sessions, networking opportunities, award recognition, and additional events throughout the year; thus, allowing for continued professional growth within the festivals and events industry.



The City of Suwanee Safety Committee has been awarded Apex Insurance's 2022 Dependable Safety Committee of the Year. This award recognizes the exceptional work of the committee in promoting a safe and secure work environment in the city.

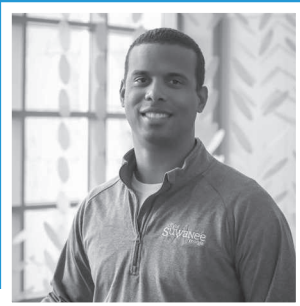
The Suwanee Safety Committee meets regularly and organizes safety-related trainings for employees to promote safe working habits, such as defensive driving classes, CPR/First Aid/AED training, and other courses. These courses provide employees with the necessary knowledge and skills to respond appropriately in emergency situations and prevent accidents.

The city has also been actively involved with the claims office on property and workers' compensation losses, ensuring that claims are promptly addressed, and employees receive the necessary support and assistance when needed.

**"The City of Suwanee never missed a scheduled opportunity to encourage a safe working environment, and team members are not just present, but actively engaged."**

- Elizabeth Warren, Apex Insurance Director of Loss Control





# From THE DESK of

**DEVIN SNAPP**  
CITY OF SUWANEE BUSINESS  
SERVICES DIVISION DIRECTOR

## Let's Get **DOWN TO BUSINESS**

So you're ready to take that brilliant idea and turn it into a thriving business? That's great! Assuming you have a thoroughly vetted business plan, all you'll need now is a funding mechanism, business location, a legal structure, federal and state tax IDs, industry and state licenses and permits....

Yes, entrepreneurship is complicated. But we have great news: the City of Suwanee business services department is here to help aspiring entrepreneurs navigate the journey from great idea to great business.

At Suwanee City Hall, our staff is eager to help guide those seeking new business ventures within the city limits. We believe that the resources within Suwanee and the greater Gwinnett County area can assist entrepreneurs from all walks of life in understanding the community and providing guidance on the pathway to a successful business.

Gwinnett County is home to multiple organizations that support aspiring entrepreneurs. These organizations possess valuable insight into the community, assist with networking opportunities, and offer guidance on how to establish a successful and thriving business.

Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce The Chamber provides opportunities for like-minded business people to connect, expand their business network, and increase the exposure of their business. The Chamber offers opportunities to learn about issues and best practices related to running a successful business at over 250 events annually. These events are designed to grow businesses while also cutting expenses and business costs.

Partnership Gwinnett The economic development arm of the Gwinnett Chamber, Partnership Gwinnett, is a public-private initiative dedicated to bringing new jobs and capital

investment to Gwinnett County. Since 2007, Partnership Gwinnett has worked with local partners to attract and retain jobs, cultivate capital investment, support educational institutions, foster workforce development, and contribute to the exceptional quality of life found in Gwinnett and the Atlanta region.

Suwanee Business Alliance A more hyper-local version of the Chamber, the SBA offers monthly membership meetings to provide an opportunity to meet new people, grow your business, and stay updated on government and business initiatives in and around the City of Suwanee.

Once you're ready to officially open for business in Suwanee (obviously!), the following items are necessary to obtain a business license within the city limits:

- Copy of a secure and verifiable identification document (i.e., an official ID)
- North American Industry Classification System code (NAICS)
- Articles of corporation
- Federal Tax Identification Number (EIN)
- State Sales and Use Tax Certification
- Fire Marshal Certification of Occupancy

At Suwanee City Hall, we are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead for our community, and we are eager to assist in any way possible. Please do not hesitate to contact us for guidance and support as you embark on your entrepreneurial journey in Suwanee. Many new adventures and opportunities for entrepreneurs and businesses can be found right here in Suwanee; we welcome all who seek to thrive and meet their business potential.



### Thank you to the 23 volunteers who came out to celebrate Arbor Day with us on February 25!

Folks from Georgia Forestry, scout troops, Suwanee employees and their families and more planted 38 trees and six southern indica azaleas around Level Creek Elementary School.

GET READY TO PARTY LIKE IT'S 1999  
(OR 1959, OR WHATEVER YEAR YOU THINK IS COOL) -  
**summer porch jam is back!**

**summer porch jam**

MEET US IN OLD TOWN  
SUWANEЕ FOR AN  
EVENING OF  
**MUSIQUE  
AL FRESCO!**

This celebration of music, community, and warm summer breezes is the ultimate throwback to the good old days when neighbors knew each other's names, and music was the glue that brought us all together.

porch at Huthmaker Violins, groove at the Burnette Rogers Pavilion on Main Street, or chill out at Everett's Music Barn. With so many front porch concert options along Main Street, you'll be spoilt for choice!

Set in the historic Main Street district, this old-fashioned summer block party is the perfect way to kick off your summer in style. Food trucks, ice-cold drinks, and sweet jams from multiple artists playing at the most unique outdoor venues - front porches! You can dance the night away on the wraparound front

No dress code, no cover charge, and no fancy-pants attitude; just bring a chair or blanket and get ready to jam out to folk, blues, rock and everything in between! Parking is available at Town Center; from there, it is a short 15-minute walk to Old Town. Complimentary shuttles will also be available.

**SUWANEЕ SUMMER PORCH JAM**

FRIDAY, JUNE 16 | 6-10PM | MAIN STREET

A full schedule of venues and musicians can be found at [Suwaneе.com](http://Suwaneе.com).



**NORTH GWINNETT  
SENIOR NAMED REGION 3A**

**STAR STUDENT**

The Professional Association of Georgia Educators Foundation announced Aditi Venkatesh, a senior at North Gwinnett High School, as the 2023 Region 3A STAR Student. STAR Students are the seniors in the top percent of their class with the highest SAT score.

Venkatesh was named Gwinnett's STAR Student in February, besting 75 students across 32 Gwinnett schools, and topping 20 other winners region level.

Venkatesh chose to honor Ms. Katie Massey as their STAR Teacher. Each STAR Student selects a teacher to recognize as the educator with a strong influence on their academic career. Venkatesh was also part of the Suwaneе Youth Leaders Class of 2022.

**★ Movies ★**

**Under the Stars:**

**DOUBLE FEATURES!**

**JUNE 10**

**7:00 pm**  
DC League of Super-Pets

**8:45 pm**  
Wonder Woman 1984

**JULY 15**

**7:00 pm**  
An American Tail:  
Fievel Goes West

**8:45 pm**  
Wild Wild West



# Local Cultural Assets JACKSON STREET CEMETERY

**Q** In Jackson Street in Old Town Suwanee, a plot now known as the Jackson Street Cemetery has served the local African American community since the 1800s.

After the land was officially deeded to “the Colored People of Suwanee” by landowner J.H. Scales in 1919, Suwanee Grove United Methodist Church – the first African American church in Suwanee – managed the cemetery. Upon the death of the deed holder, Mrs. Juanita Meriday, the City of Suwanee assumed responsibility for maintaining the grounds, working to appropriately demarcate and identify gravesites, and ensure that the appropriate care due to a sacred space is provided.



**Juanita Meriday**

Among the many African American Suwanee citizens buried in Jackson Street Cemetery are soldiers, landowners, entrepreneurs, and General Motors workers. Notably, it is also the final resting place of WWII veteran Grady Daniel, who was the first African American to serve on the Suwanee City Council.

## Suwanee Historic Downtown Preservation Initiative

As her Girl Scout Gold Award Project, Ashlee Tam spent several months identifying Suwanee’s local cultural assets, researching and writing about them, and interviewing “local legends” who impacted people and places (and some place names) in Suwanee.

Visit [Suwanee.com](http://Suwanee.com) or scan the QR code to read more and view the videos. You might see a few familiar faces, and learn something too!



## SUWANEE PERFORMING ARTS INVITES YOU TO PARIS (I.E., TOWN CENTER PARK) FOR

# BROADWAY in the park

Suwanee Performing Arts (SPA) is saying, “Bonjour, Suwanee!” with their annual Broadway in the Park event! The free, family-friendly show features *The Aristocats KIDS*, followed by *Anastasia: The Musical* (Youth Edition), at 7 pm on July 28 & 29. The Broad Street Concert Band of Sugar Hill will provide pre-show entertainment.

Broadway in the Park is the Suwanee Performing Arts’ signature summer production performed in the park each July. The Town Center amphitheater is transformed into a Broadway-style stage with professional lighting, sound, costumes,

sets, and our community’s most talented student actors and actresses.

Based on the 1970 Disney animated classic and featuring a jazzy, upbeat score, *The Aristocats* tells the story of upbeat alley cat Thomas O’Malley and high society cat Duchess in 30 minutes of feline fun.

Inspired by the beloved film, *Anastasia* is the spectacular new musical about a brave young woman sets out to discover the mystery of her past. Set in the twilight of the Russian Empire to the euphoria of Paris in the 1920s, *Anastasia* embarks on an epic adventure to find home, love, and family.

“Broadway in the Park is SPA’s biggest fundraiser of the year,” said Assistant City Manager Denise Brinson. “The city is thrilled to host this annual event on the Town Center stage and help support an organization that brings so much to our community.”

**Reserved seating should be pre-purchased at [SuwaneePerformingArts.org](http://SuwaneePerformingArts.org) or 678-482-6333.**



# Cheers!

On Friday, March 31, the City of Suwanee cut the ribbon on the Suwanee Youth Leaders (SYL) Cheers Project.



The 'Cheers Spot' hang out space, located on the lawn area behind City Hall, features swinging picnic tables, Adirondack chairs, and a stairway mural featuring narwhals and the quote, "Be so amazing that people think you're a myth." The SYL Cheers Committee spent countless hours designing, planning, fundraising, and creating the Cheers Spot.

Each SYL class chooses a Cheers Project (or service project) to

give back to the community. The Cheers Project is dedicated to the memory of Adam Edge, a former city employee and co-founder of the SYL program. Dedicated to youth and the community, Adam always had time to "hang" with his SYLiens; the Class of 2022 envisioned a space for youth to continue to gather and spread positivity.



Last fall, the City of Suwanee sent out the call for old trophies and other outdated relics of past glory. Expecting a few hundred, the city received a *few thousand*; they were delivered by the truckload to artist Phil Proctor to create an awe-inspiring, giant trophy out of many: the Ultimate Participation Trophy! The new public art piece was unveiled in Town Center Park on Saturday, April 29 at 1:00 pm during the Suwanee Arts Festival.

"I asked my kids if they want their old trophies, and the answer was a hard no," said Suwanee Assistant City Manager and empty nester Denise Brinson. "As a parent, it's hard to just throw them away. This project gives those mementos a meaningful purpose and second life."



Funding for this project was provided by a grant from Gwinnett Creativity Fund, which works to provide support for arts and cultural initiatives within Gwinnett County. The Gwinnett Creativity Fund is supported by Gwinnett County and managed and administered by Explore Gwinnett.

True to the nature of the participation trophy, everyone wins - houses were decluttered, and the city got a new piece of public art!



## SUWANEE POLICE LIEUTENANT COMPLETES PRESTIGIOUS FBI NATIONAL TRAINING ACADEMY

Suwanee Police Lieutenant Bryan Hickey recently completed the prestigious FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia. The ten-week program provides leadership, communication, and fitness training for law enforcement agents from all over the world. The class included agents from 28 countries, four military organizations, and five federal civilian organizations.

Lieutenant Hickey has been on a long waiting list, having applied for the National Academy in 2013. Only five participants are chosen from the state each quarter. Lieutenant Hickey joins Chief Cass Mooney as the only other Suwanee Police graduate.

"Less than one percent of all law enforcement leaders in the U.S. are able to attend the academy, so it's a pretty big honor for me," said Hickey.

Hosted in the facility that trains FBI special agents and intelligence analysts, Lieutenant Hickey was able to learn from academy instructors, special agents, and other staff.

"Classes were great because you're learning from experts in the field," said Hickey. "All the instructors were FBI agents that are later into their careers or retired, and each one had a wealth of knowledge."

As the Suwanee Police Training Director and leader of the Special Response Unit, Lieutenant Hickey really enjoyed the class on crisis negotiations, as it provided new insight into his work.

"The crisis negotiation course gave me tools that I can use in evaluation and how to deal with higher risk situations," Hickey states.

Another aspect of the Academy that Lieutenant Hickey enjoyed was the comradery and networking that afforded the opportunity to meet law enforcement from agencies in different states and countries.

"You're interacting with all different personnel from all over the states and world. It gives it a different dynamic. It helps give you a different perspective that you may not have had prior to."

## UPCOMINGEVENTS

official newsletter of the city of suwanee, georgia

### JUNE 23

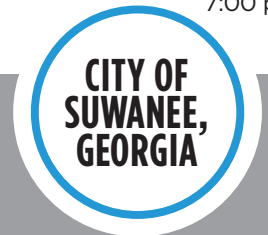
|    |   |         |
|----|---|---------|
| 2  | Food Truck Friday                           | 5:30 pm |
| 3  | Farmers Market                              | 8:00 am |
| 6  | Planning Commission                         | 6:30 pm |
| 10 | Farmers Market                              | 8:00 am |
| 10 | Movies Under the Stars                      | 7:00 pm |
| 12 | Suwanee Fest Planning Committee             | 6:00 pm |
| 13 | Harvest Farm Managing Board                 | 6:00 pm |
| 14 | Public Arts Commission                      | 6:00 pm |
| 15 | City Council Workshop                       | 5:30 pm |
| 15 | Public Hearing on Proposed FY2024 Budget    | 5:30 pm |
| 16 | Summer Porch Jam (Old Town)                 | 6:00 pm |
| 17 | Farmers Market                              | 8:00 am |
| 19 | CITY HALL CLOSED                            |         |
| 20 | Downtown Development Authority              | 7:30 am |
| 20 | Zoning Board of Appeals                     | 6:30 pm |
| 24 | Farmers Market                              | 8:00 am |
| 24 | Glow in the Dark Concert: Make Rare Visible | 6:00 pm |
| 27 | City Council Meeting                        | 6:30 pm |
| 27 | Public Hearing on Proposed FY2024 Budget    | 6:30 pm |

### JULY 23

|    |                                 |         |
|----|---------------------------------|---------|
| 1  | Farmers Market                  | 8:00 am |
| 4  | CITY HALL CLOSED                |         |
| 7  | Food Truck Friday               | 5:30 pm |
| 8  | Farmers Market                  | 8:00 am |
| 10 | Suwanee Fest Planning Committee | 6:00 pm |
| 11 | Harvest Farm Managing Board     | 6:00 pm |
| 11 | Planning Commission             | 6:30 pm |
| 12 | Public Arts Commission          | 6:00 pm |
| 13 | City Council Workshop           | 5:30 pm |
| 15 | Farmers Market                  | 8:00 am |
| 15 | Movies Under the Stars          | 7:00 pm |
| 18 | Downtown Development Authority  | 7:30 am |
| 18 | Zoning Board of Appeals         | 6:30 pm |
| 22 | Farmers Market                  | 8:00 am |
| 25 | City Council Meeting            | 6:30 pm |
| 28 | Broadway in the Park            | 7:00 pm |
| 29 | Farmers Market                  | 8:00 am |
| 29 | Broadway in the Park            | 7:00 pm |

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**FINANCIAL SERVICES** Amie Sakmar 770/904-2797  
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**PUBLIC WORKS** Bob Dean 770/904-3373  
**EDITOR** Abby Wilkerson 770/945-3386



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Unless otherwise noted, City of Suwanee public meetings are at City Hall, 330 Town Center Avenue. Dates subject to change; check [suwanee.com](http://suwanee.com) for updates.