



Suwanee connects

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suwanee.com | April 2024

FESTIVAL SEASON IS HERE:

Suwanee Arts Festival & International Night Market

Suwanee's Town Center Park is gearing up for two spectacular April events that showcase the city's artistic spirit and rich diversity.

Set to enchant art lovers on April 13-14, the Suwanee Arts Festival is a two-day event with talented artists showcasing and selling high-quality art in various media. Presented by the Suwanee Arts Center, festival attendees can anticipate a diverse array of artistic offerings, including painting, ceramics, photography, sculpture, woodwork, jewelry, glasswork, and fiber art. The Suwanee Arts Center will host a workshop tent to help participants build a lantern for the following weekend's Glow in the Park parade. On Saturday evening don't miss Nero Simon and

the Sunsetters. The band's energetic live performances feature a blend of original music and solid gold covers with a style that gives a nod to the soft sounds of the 70s and 80s and the Yacht Rock era.

Reflecting on the Suwanee Arts Festival's journey, Cynthia Hill, Executive Director of the Suwanee Arts Center, highlights its growing momentum over the years. "This year marks a significant expansion, with our members' exhibit tent planned to be double the size of last year's. This area brings the gallery work of our member artists to the lawn's vibrant festival. We anticipate an impressive showcase featuring the work of over 200 artists'."

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Left to right, back row - James Lauricella, Trinity Hsu, Sarah Munz, Jason Phillips, & Mickey Eyre.
Left to right, front row - Billqeece Naqawe and Amy Doherty



Members of the Suwanee Police Department were recognized for outstanding work in 2023, including:

- Officer of the Year** - Officer David-Scott Dusten
- Civilian of the Year** - Lexi Rowe
- Supervisor of the Year** - Sergeant Andrew Busino
- Lifesaving Award** - Officer Justin Koerper and Sydney Hildebrand
- Top Gun** - Sergeant Brody Thomas
- Chief's Award** - Corporal Osvaldo Hawse

Left to right - Officer David-Scott Dusten, Lexi Rowe, Sydney Hildebrand, Corporal Osvaldo Hawse, Sergeant Andrew Busino

The City of Suwanee celebrated its hardworking employees at the annual Employee Appreciation Event in late February. Staff members submitted nominations for their fellow coworkers to celebrate their accomplishments and honor their commitment to making our community great. Please join us in congratulating the following employees:

Results Champions: Champions of results & progress, recognized for achieving a monumental accomplishment in the past year.

- Nathan Deans, *Police*
- James Lauricella, *Public Works*

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

- Mickey Eyre, *Planning & Inspections*
- Jason Phillips, *Finance*

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

- Trinity Hsu, *Finance*
- Todd Cribbs, *Police*

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

- Amy Doherty, *Economic Development*
- Henry Harden, *Public Works*

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

- Sarah Munz, *Finance*
- Billqeece Naqawe, *Chief Executive Office*



Suwanee Residents,

I am delighted to introduce myself as your new Communications & Marketing Manager for the City of Suwanee. As a Gwinnett native, born and raised, I am excited to represent Suwanee in this capacity. I look forward to the opportunity to engage, inform, and connect with you through the newsletter.

If you see me around grabbing a chai, coming in last place in a 5k, or playing with my family at PlayTown, please feel free to introduce yourself. And if you have a great topic for the newsletter, please share that too! I look forward to meeting each of you.

Best,

Bonnie Simmons

BEHIND THE SCENES: New to the City

The City of Suwanee prides itself on hiring high-quality candidates to fill positions that serve the city in various capacities, from Planning & Zoning to Finance to Public Works and Police.

Please join us in welcoming the following employees to the City of Suwanee!

Hired in 2023

AJ Asadullah	Jessica Sweeney
Alexa Carrillo	Juliana Wright
Ariel Christie	Kelsey Wiley
Ashley Washington	Kenny Reeves
Bonnie Simmons	Lori Forrand
Brandon Guerrier	Matthew Irvine
Carmelo Suarez	Nidia Castillo
Carolina Mauersberg	Rick Major
Cierra Hurt	Riley Johnson
Gabrielle Goodyear	Robert Hayles
Jane Yap	Will Haney
Jenessa Cephacile	

Congratulations to some pretty amazing work anniversaries! These employees are an integral part of our success!

1st anniversary in 2023

Abby Miller	Jessica Escamilla
Amir Mahfoozpour	Karla McElroy
Brandon Warren	Kenny Martin
Brian Harris	Kevin Contreras-Martinez
Daniel Kuanda	Logan Tanner
David Philyaw	Lorna Tanner
Don Cramer	Mark Agee
Glenn Poole	Peyton Chiang
Hunter Bauman	Sarah Munz
James Lauricella	Wilson Baughman

5th anniversary in 2023

Bill Stinehart	Myra White
Cassandra Jackson	Sung Jae Park
Harriet Drummond	Sydney Hildebrand
Justin Koerper	

10th anniversary in 2023

Robyn O'Donnell

15th anniversary in 2023

Elizabeth Reisner
Robert Stevens
Simon Byun

20th anniversary in 2023

Taranta Anderson

25th anniversary in 2023

Marty Allen
Denise Brinson

Suwanee Strikes Gold: Clinches Seven Awards, Including Event Professional of the Year!

The best and the brightest were recognized at the Southeast Festivals and Events Association's 2024 Kaleidoscope Awards Gala. The City of Suwanee brought home seven awards for the 2023 event season. Among the accomplishments, Kim Towne, the city's dedicated Events Coordinator, was honored with the coveted title of Event Professional of the Year.

Amy Doherty, Events & Outreach Manager, expressed her excitement, "Kim has been an amazing part of our event team for nine years now. She continually pushes the boundaries of creativity and innovation, ensuring the returning events are fresh and new events reflect our evolving community. Her contributions have been invaluable, and she is definitely the event professional of the year in our book!"

The accolades for the City of Suwanee include:

- **Event Professional of the Year:** Kim Towne
- **GOLD:** Best Event Photograph, Storyteller at Suwanee Fest
- **GOLD:** Best Festival or Event T-shirt, Suwanee Fest (Staff shirt "not my first rodeo")
- **GOLD:** Best Social Media Campaign, Merch Madness
- **GOLD:** Best Art Activation, Ultimate Participation Trophy
- **SILVER:** Best Photo Op, Bob the Statuary Man at Suwanee Fest
- **SILVER:** Best Event Under \$20,000, Summer Porch Jam

The City heartily congratulates Big South Productions, the group behind Suwanee Beer Fest, Suwanee Wine Fest, and other events, on their SFEA recognitions as well.

- **GOLD:** Best Website, Suwanee Beer Fest
- **SILVER:** Best Photo Op, Suwanee Wine Fest for grape stomping
- **BRONZE:** Best Social Media, Suwanee Beer Fest

The Southeast Festivals and Events Association is the premier organization for festivals and events in the Southeast, which includes eleven states. The SFEA evaluated 170 event applications this year, honoring cities and other groups for their outstanding work.



DID YOU KNOW

1817 vs. 1949



Suwanee is celebrating 75 years of community. But wait...doesn't City Hall say '1817' on the front of the building? What's the story here?

Historically speaking, in 1817 the Suwanee Old Town area was identified as a place in a treaty between the Cherokee Indians and the U.S. government.

However, it wasn't until 1949 that the state incorporated the City of Suwanee.

When City Hall was built in 2009, there were many details to hash out (anyone tried building their own house?) before its opening. The architects who designed City Hall came across the 1817 date and put it on the plans without too much discussion. The contractors followed the plans and put it up as shown. From paint colors to flooring to roofing to the types of windows, no one really noticed. It was kind of a small easter egg surprise when the building was finished, and so it stayed.

The date on City Hall isn't technically wrong... it's just not the date we are celebrating now. In short, Suwanee was first identified as a place as far back as 1817 but didn't become an official city until 1949.

...and now you know the rest of the story.

But the artistic celebration doesn't end there! Get ready for the International Night Market & Glow in the Park on April 19-20, a spectacle that literally lights up Town Center Park. Born in 2017 as a walking lantern parade, the small festival quickly grew to become a highlight on Suwanee's event calendar.

"We were looking to add another fun spring festival in Suwanee and our events always have a unique twist!" said Amy Doherty, Events and Outreach Manager.

Partnering with the Atlanta International Night Market (AINM) in 2022, the event expanded into a cultural experience that both enriches and displays the vibrant multiculturalism present in our community. The AINM offers an impressive live entertainment schedule, diverse art, and food vendors from across the state. Stunning illuminated Chinese lantern art across the Town Center lawn is provided by Illuminate Georgia.



A highlight of the weekend is the Glow in the Park lantern parade and concert held on Saturday just after 8 pm. This community celebration encourages participants to create illuminated lanterns to parade together. Guests can build a lantern at one of the Suwanee Arts Center's workshops held the week before the event, purchase pre-made or DIY kits at the Center's website, or get crafty with their own imagination. This electrical spectacle is family- and pet-friendly, so everyone can join in as we make our beloved park glow in the dark! Patrons can then make their way to the lawn to enjoy the soulful vocals and funky rhythm sounds of The Ray Howard Band, a classy and exciting Motown Tribute Band that specializes in Earth, Wind & Fire hits.





The Town Center on Main Project: A Conversation with Brian Miller

Design Project Manager

In the heart of Suwanee, Town Center on Main + DeLay Nature Park is evolving to be a signature addition to the city's downtown. Brian Miller, the Design Project Manager with Clark Patterson Lee (CPL), has been in the forefront of this transformative journey. As the orchestrator of design aspects, Brian's role required aligning the intricate details of the conceptual design to the city's vision.

When asked about the inspiration behind Town Center on Main's design, Brian emphasized its uniqueness. The property's substantial change in elevation from the north end of the park (near the new fire station) to the south end (near the library) allowed for innovative elements like the pedestrian bridge, not just as an aesthetic feature but as a functional solution. The design was a collective effort to create a park that stood out from any other park in the area. All of the park features; the bridge, canopy structures, the fountains, the open lawn areas – all were developed with this in mind.

“ The community understands and appreciates how art enhances public spaces which can be seen throughout the City of Suwanee. We wanted to provide a canvas from which the community can build on and create spaces where art can be incorporated naturally to enhance the overall experience of the space. We feel that each park element can adapt and evolve as the needs of the park change in the future.
- Brian Miller ”

Brian shed light on the choice of materials, highlighting concrete and steel for their flexibility in executing the complexity of the design they set out to achieve. These materials provided the canvas for an urban park that maintained a connection to the existing Town Center while allowing for intricate geometries and distinctive shapes.

Much like Town Center Park, this is intended to be a 100+ year park. From the design approach to the material selection, this park will serve many, many future generations and continue to evolve over time.

The sheer size of the park initially created challenges, from a macro perspective, in how to place all the elements the community was looking for in the park. The bridge and canopy structures posed aesthetic and structural difficulties, requiring meticulous three-dimensional visualization. The bridge, envisioned as a signature piece, underwent multiple design variations to strike a balance between constructability, cost, and maintaining the original vision.

The park design includes three water features, each designed to be unique yet cohesive. On the south end of the park, the main water feature required collaborative efforts with fountain designers to develop an efficient pumping system, housed discreetly beneath a landscaped area, ensuring both aesthetic appeal and practical functionality. Adjacent to the plaza, the Veterans' Memorial fountain created a harmonious walkway, designed to give the illusion of a bridge connecting the two. A sophisticated piping system beneath the walkway maintains equal water levels, enhancing the fluidity of the park's design. Lastly, at the hilltop's north end, the fountain and waterfall presented its own set of challenges, demanding an extensive waterproofing system to preserve the structure. Balancing pedestrian safety, structural integrity, and design aesthetics, this cascade added a captivating touch to the diverse water features throughout the park.

According to Brian, the park's design goes beyond face value. The size of the park and inherent change in elevation have created varied spaces within the park that offer diverse experiences. For example, the area beneath the bridge near the library called the "grotto" area, provides a more secluded space for people to gather with access to the library and plaza. The park isn't just about expected features but being able to provide these along with the not-so-subtle aspects truly does make this park exceptional. Importantly, the design leaves room for evolution, intentionally keeping spaces open for future programming as the community sees fit.

As for Brian's favorite aspect of the park, he is partial to the fluid design of the bridge that brings people over the park to the features at the hilltop area. Brian hopes Town Center on Main + DeLay Nature Park is enjoyed by everyone for many years to come.



For further updates please watch our social media and visit suwanee.com.

SNAP Suwanee

CONTEST WINNERS

If you could capture the essence of Suwanee in a picture, what would it look like?

SNAP Suwanee encouraged the community to submit images depicting the vibrancy, vitality, and livability of our city from portraits to lifestyle and landscapes. The four categories for this year included:



Suwanee Gems:

From photo-worthy landmarks to one-of-a-kind murals and secret hikes to splash pads. These images showed us the local spots that make Suwanee ours.

Suwanee Wildlife:

Calling all furry, feathered, and four-legged friends! These images captured the cutest creatures in your homes and around your neighborhoods.

Suwanee Fans:

Capture the passion of the community coming together. Love the Suwanee Fest parade or have a favorite local sports team? These images showed us your pride-worthy local events.

Suwanee Favs:

Local businesses are the cornerstone of every neighborhood. From your favorite taco establishment to your daily coffee shop, these images were a shout-out to support your favorite local go-tos.

Congratulations TO THIS YEAR'S WINNERS!



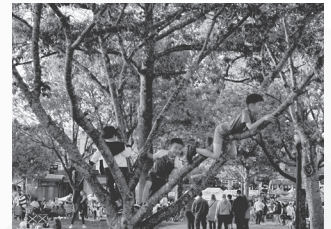
"One Hot Summer in Suwanee"
Judith Cho



"Mariachi Statue"
Les Corbett



"Looking up in Suwanee"
Wolfgang Enneker



"Little Explorers"
Bob Benson



"Aquatic Ballet"
Doreen Johnson



"Farmers Market Florals"
Daniela Conroy



"Illuminated"
Bob Benson



"Suwanee Creek Bandit"
Ross McDaniel

TWO DECADES OF *Artful Surprises*

The beloved Art on a Limb program celebrates its 20th anniversary of creative, finders-keepers fun in Suwanee. For two decades, joy has been found in discovering hidden art gems throughout Suwanee's parks and trails every May. This program raises awareness about the arts as an economic driver for Suwanee and provides local artists an opportunity to showcase their skills. But what's the history behind this unique program?

Two decades ago, after the city's then-event manager, Vicki Keyser, visited Jekyll Island to attend a conference. Inspired by their 'Island Treasures' program, Suwanee created a similar program to encourage community members to explore the parks and greenways. "We were just opening the Suwanee Creek Greenway, so our thought process was to take the island treasures idea and move it to something that would encourage people to visit the Greenway," explained Amy Doherty, Events and Outreach Manager. Over the years, the program has expanded to include Brushy Creek Trail, White Street Park, and Sims Lake Park. Past art pieces have included hand-painted sections of the old water tower, various ceramics, birdhouses, photo magnets, fairy doors, and more.

In May, when our trails and parks begin to turn green and the flowers start to bloom, the city hides two pieces of original art daily on the Suwanee Creek Greenway, Brushy Creek Trail, White Street Park, or Sims Lake Park.

This year, clay mushrooms created by local Suwanee resident, Lilly Vicens, will pop up on the trails. Lilly, a writer by trade, never considered herself an artist until she began playing with Play-Doh at the kitchen table with her young daughter. Now, she is in her third year of being a ceramic artist with a home studio. "When I read about the Art on a Limb program, I immediately knew it was the perfect fit for my work."

Lilly explains that her family often hikes and bikes in Suwanee parks, spotting mushrooms in nature.

I imagine someone playing at a park or walking the greenway and the excitement they might feel by seeing a flash of color from a mushroom cap. I love the idea of someone stopping to 'pick' a mushroom that they can take home and keep forever. I hope people feel joy when they find one of my mushrooms, as well as a connection to nature that I so often strive for while making my art. That is what Art on a Limb is to me: a vibrant way to engage people in the Suwanee community with art and nature.
- Lilly Vicens

If you are lucky enough to find one, that beautiful piece becomes yours - all we ask is that you send us a picture or tag us in your post on social media! The more you visit our parks and trails, the more chances you have.

Enjoy the hunt!



UPCOMINGEVENTS

official newsletter of the city of suwanee, georgia

APRIL 24

- | | | |
|-----------|---|----------|
| 6 | Race to Cure Sarcoma 5K | 8:00 am |
| 8 | Suwanee Fest Planning Meeting | 6:00 pm |
| 9 | Harvest Farm Managing Board | 6:00 pm |
| 9 | Planning Commission | 6:30 pm |
| 10 | Public Arts Commission | 6:00 pm |
| 11 | City Council Workshop | 5:30 pm |
| 13 | Winter Farmers Market | 9:00 am |
| 13 | Suwanee Arts Festival | 10:00 am |
| 14 | Suwanee Arts Festival | Noon |
| 16 | Downtown Development Authority | 7:30 am |
| 16 | Zoning Board of Appeals | 6:30 pm |
| 19 | International Night Market | 5:00 pm |
| 20 | Glow in the Park & International Night Market | 2:00 pm |
| 23 | City Council Meeting | 6:30 pm |
| 25 | City Council Special Budget Workshop | 5:30 pm |
| 27 | Relay for Life Gwinnett | 8:00 am |
| 27 | Winter Farmers Market | 9:00 am |

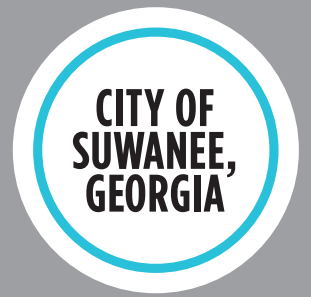
MAY 24

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|-----------|--------------------------------------|----------|
| 2 | Red Cross Blood Drive | 10:00 am |
| 3 | Max's Moon Run & Concert | 6:30 pm |
| 4 | Farmers Market | 8:00 am |
| 4 | Tacos & Tequila 5K & Concert | 11:00 am |
| 7 | Planning Commission | 6:30 pm |
| 9 | City Council Special Budget Workshop | 5:30 pm |
| 11 | Farmers Market | 8:00 am |
| 11 | AANHPI Heritage Month Celebration | Noon |
| 13 | Suwanee Fest Planning Meeting | 6:00 pm |
| 14 | Harvest Farm Managing Board | 6:00 pm |
| 15 | Public Arts Commission | 6:30 pm |
| 16 | City Council Workshop | 5:30 pm |
| 18 | Farmers Market | 8:00 am |
| 18 | Great Strides Atlanta | 9:00 am |
| 19 | Atlanta British Motorcar Day | 10:00 am |
| 21 | Downtown Development Authority | 7:30 am |
| 21 | Zoning Board of Appeals | 6:30 pm |
| 24 | Red, White, Bluegrass, & Bach | 7:00 pm |
| 25 | Farmers Market | 8:00 am |
| 27 | City Hall Closed | 8:00 am |
| 28 | City Council Meeting | 6:30 pm |


MAYOR Jimmy Burnette 770/868-7115
COUNCIL Pete Charpentier 770/757-3323
 Beth Hilscher 678/546-3388
 Julianna McConnell 770/713-1249
 Linnea Miller 678/592-4150
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CITY CLERK Robyn O'Donnell 770/904-2790
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PLANNING & INSPECTIONS Josh Campbell 770/904-3372
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PUBLIC WORKS Matt Gore 770/904-3373
EDITOR Bonnie Simmons 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.



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