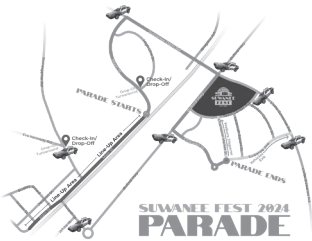


official newsletter of the city of suwanee, georgia

# Suwanee connects

suwanee.com | September 2024

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Now Open PlayTown Suwanee & Town Center on Main

## 40<sup>TH</sup> CELEBRATION!



**TOWN CENTER PARK**

# SUWANEE FEST

EST. 1984

**PRESENTED BY:**



OUTDOORLIGHTING  
PERSPECTIVES®

SATURDAY,  
**SEPT. 21<sup>ST</sup>** 2024  
9 AM - 7 PM

SUNDAY,  
**SEPT. 22<sup>ND</sup>** 2024  
12 PM - 5 PM



FOR ALL THE DEETS: [SuwaneeFest.com](http://SuwaneeFest.com)

**THANK YOU TO OUR 2024 PLATINUM SPONSORS!**



GWINNETT CHURCH

NORTHSIDE HOSPITAL



Suwanee magazine

BACK TO THE 80'S!



# SUWANEE FEST

EST. 1984

Oh, snap! Suwanee Fest is turning 40 and it's time to make it totally tubular! Gag me with a spoon if you're not excited because we're throwing the **ULTIMATE 80's** party in Town Center Park! On September 21 and 22 the 40th annual Suwanee Fest is gonna be like, totally radical, dude!

On Saturday, September 21, at 9:00 am, catch the parade, where all kinds of crews bring their A-game, rocking themed floats and performances that are more rad than a mixtape.

Are you on the hunt for bodacious handcrafted treasures, righteous artwork, gnarly wood and metalwork, one-of-a-kind pottery, jewelry, or a mega stash of gourmet grub? Suwanee Fest is the go-to spot with the sickest vendors in the Southeast. Scope out over 100 artists during Suwanee Fest weekend!

The stage is lit all weekend with mind-blowing entertainment, roaming performers spreading good vibes throughout the park, and headline concerts wrapping up each festival day. Brace yourselves because every moment is a thrill ride of nonstop entertainment!

This year, our Family Fun Zone is going totally 80's with a "Block Party" packed with rad activities for kids of all ages! Your little dudes and dudettes can make a pet rock, hit up the "tubular" transformation station, jam out in a freeze dance competition with friends, and dive into the totally awesome, fan-favorite sandbox! Rides and inflatables are also available throughout the park.

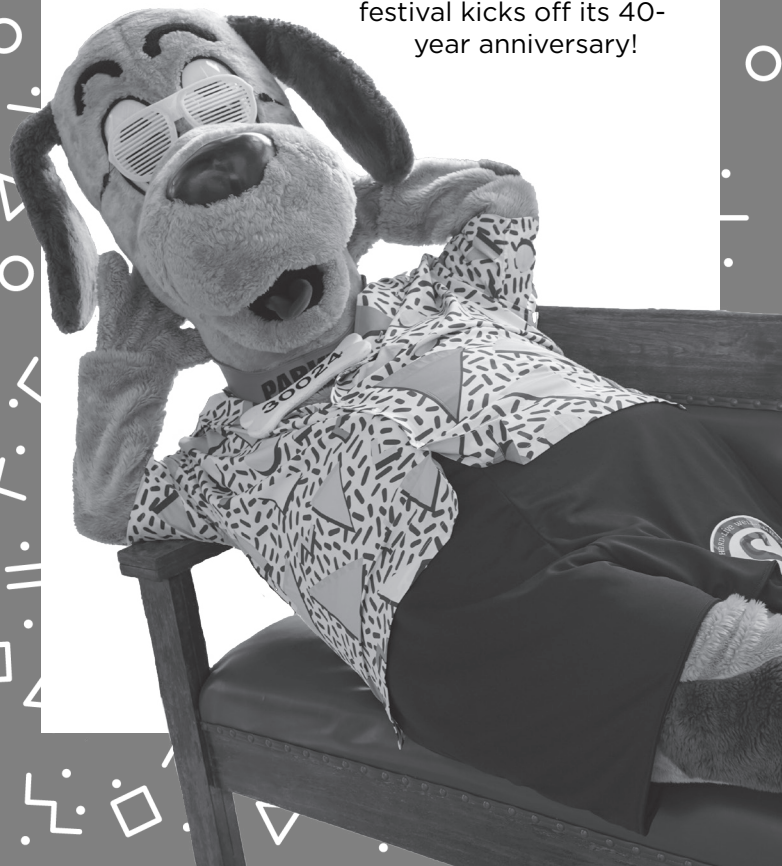
You won't want to miss this

*Epic Event!*

## SUWANEE FEST ADDS **SENSORY TENT**

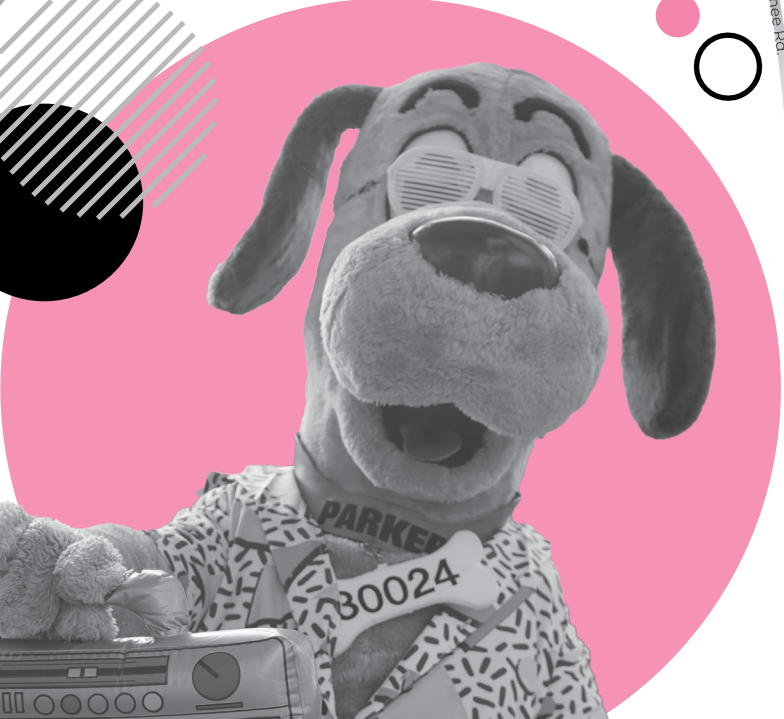
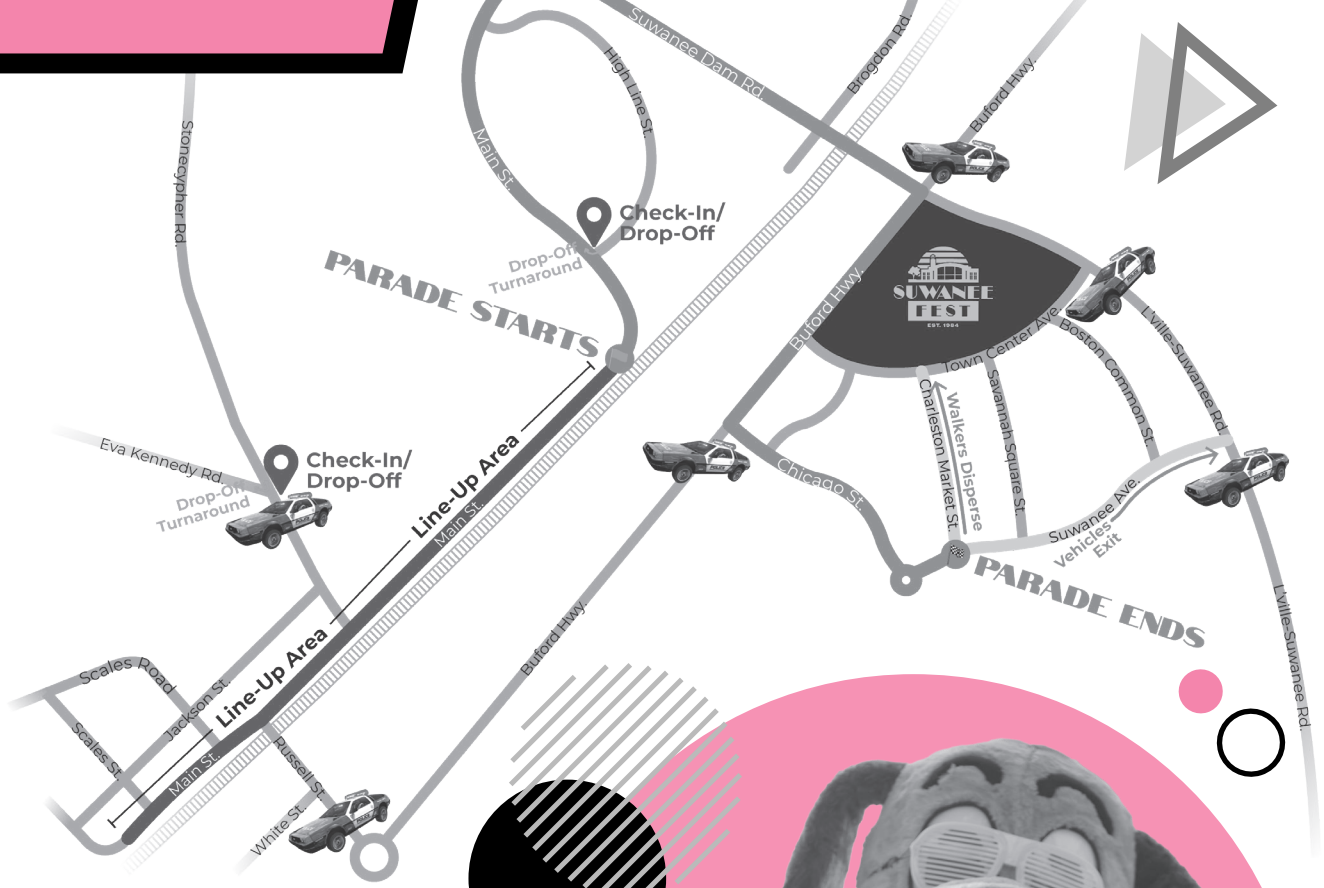
Suwanee Fest will feature a Sensory Tent this year to provide a more inclusive experience! The Sensory Tent will offer a peaceful reprieve from the festival's excitement, relieving those who may feel overwhelmed or overstimulated. A dedicated team will guide children needing a breather through in-house activities designed to soothe overstimulation. Families can bring their children to sit and relax in the lounge area and participate in activities as needed. Noise-canceling headphones are available for use within the tent. Fidget toys, sunglasses, drawing pads with crayons, and stress balls will be available (while supplies last), offering support for children who may need them throughout the festival.

As Audrey Johnson's Girl Scout Gold Award, this thoughtful addition to Suwanee Fest provides an inclusive and accessible environment as the festival kicks off its 40-year anniversary!



# SUWANEE FEST PARADE

SEPTEMBER 21 9:00 AM



Get ready to flashback to the 80s with our totally tubular Suwanee Fest Parade—an absolute blast that keeps the crowd grooving year after year! The parade begins motoring along Main Street, turning right onto Suwanee Dam Road and then Buford Highway. To catch the performances, position yourself near the judges' station positioned at Town Center Park. Or catch a bird's eye view from the elevated pedestrian walkway at Town Center on Main!

Ditch the FOMO and jump into the parade action where schools, businesses, clubs, and crews of all kinds bring their A-game, rocking themed floats and performances that are more rad than a mixtape. It's a total community shindig with hundreds of locals strutting their stuff, vying for the ultimate titles like Most Creative, Most Entertaining, Best Reflection of Theme, Best Float, or the grand prize of Overall Best of Show! To learn more, visit [www.SuwaneeFest.com/parade](http://www.SuwaneeFest.com/parade).

# SATURDAY, SEPT 21

## 10:30-10:50 **NEXUS DRUMLINE**

NeXuS Drumline, a competition and performance group featuring local student percussionists, has won numerous national trophies. See them first in the Suwanee Fest Parade and then on the Town Center Stage to kick off the festival!



## 11:15-11:30 **PHOENIX WELLNESS ARTS**

Phoenix Wellness Arts (PWA) is where martial arts meets the holistic pursuit of well-being. Focusing on Chinese martial arts, its performers display skill, discipline, and martial artistry in breathtaking forms, high-flying kicks, and precise techniques.

## 11:50-12:10 **ALL STARS PERFORMING ARTS ACADEMY**



*ALL STARS Performing Arts Academy*

Be entertained by ALL STARS Performing Arts Academy, an award-winning, performance-focused school that delivers high-tech training. For 11 years running, it has been voted Best of Gwinnett in Best Artistic Venue, Best Performing Arts School, and Best Summer Camp.

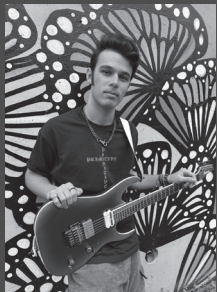
## 2:00-2:45

### **CHRISTIANA ALAIRE**

Georgia artist Christiana Alaire, a golden-ticket competitor on Season 20 of ABC's American Idol, is known for her unique 'Soultry' blend of old soul and southern roots. Her vibrant personality, signature color, and commanding vocals make her stand out as the real deal... or rather, the real teal.



## 12:40-1:25 **BRETT RYDER**



Brett Ryder, an 18-year-old singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, is known for his soulful vocals and infectious melodies. Ryder's unique blend of timeless charm and contemporary sound is evident in his fourth single, Why Hold On.

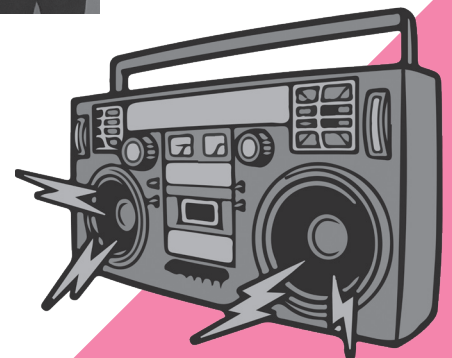


## 3:30-4:30 **DETURNA**

Three Georgia teens—Rett Bush, Kingston Nolan, and Justin Lewis—met by chance at band camp and formed Deturna. Their fresh sound, rooted in expansive influences, features powerful rock anthems and memorable songs that push the boundaries of songwriting.

## 5:30-7:00 **HEADLINER: RUBIKS GROOVE**

Rubiks Groove, the ultimate 'Outside of the Box' tribute band, delivers electrifying performances that spotlight iconic 80's, 90's, and 00's hits. Known for their unforgettable, high-energy shows, they turn every stage into a dance party, leaving everyone on their feet and grooving along.



## 12:00-12:20 **DANCE ARTS CENTRE**

Enjoy performances by this local award-winning performing arts company.



### 1:00-1:45 **ALEX BOYER**

Alex Boyer, a teen musician from Forsyth County, began developing his craft at just 7 years old with a guitar instructor. Over the years, Alex has built a deep catalog of songs across many genres, picked up the piano, and developed a passion for performing on stage.



### 2:15-3:00 **REMEDY**

Hailing from Atlanta, Remedy is a cover band with roots in the 1990's to current-day alternative rock music. Its members are diverse but are commonly influenced by grunge and modern alt-rock sound. Remedy strives to bring the best of this genre to every audience.



### 4:00-5:00 **HEADLINER: SESSIONEARS**

Formed in 2015, the Sessionears are a locally grown 5-piece band that cover a wide range of energetic Rock 'n Roll from the 1970's golden era through today's hits. Their music is geared to getting audiences of all ages who like to move to the groove up on their feet dancing.



Breakdancing will be performed throughout the weekend by

## ACE STUDIOS

With over 15 years of experience, Ace Studios will provide dance entertainment for all! From top rock and down rock to power moves and freezes, check out the high-energy moves throughout the day or learn some of the fancy footwork for yourself during the instruction times!

#### Saturday:

- 12:15 - 12:35 Breakdancing Set
- 1:30 - 1:50 Breakdancing Teaching
- 2:50 - 3:10 Breakdancing Set

#### Sunday:

- 12:30 - 12:50 Breakdancing Set
- 1:50 - 2:10 Breakdancing Teaching
- 3:10 - 3:30 Breakdancing Set



# Featured VENDORS

Are you on the hunt for bodacious handcrafted treasures, righteous artwork, gnarly wood and metalwork, one-of-a-kind pottery, jewelry, or a mega stash of gourmet grub? Suwanee Fest is the go-to spot with the sickest vendors in the Southeast.

**SCOPE OUT OVER 100 ARTISTS DURING SUWANEE FEST WEEKEND**



## A MEASURE OF CLAY

**BOOTH # R 01**

A Measure of Clay is known for its functional and food-safe pottery. Potter Richard Shivers adds unique textures through carving and stamping, ensuring that each piece is special. His pottery features wheel-thrown and slab-built clay pieces designed for daily use, enhancing mealtimes with its beauty and functionality. Among his collections are the Word Bowls, which feature positive words embossed on small bowls, and the Quilted pottery pieces, inspired by his father's quilt. This year, Richard is excited to introduce new mug and tray designs, along with small trays in various themes.

## IRON RUSTORATION

**BOOTH # R 28**

Specializing in repurposing agricultural tools, scrap metal, and reclaimed railroad hardware, John Ellison transforms these materials into stunning art pieces. Influenced by his grandfather's resourcefulness and his father's welding skills, John developed a keen eye for seeing the potential in overlooked materials. His creations are a testament to his vision of recovering, reclaiming, and repurposing discarded items, turning them into functional art.



## JANIYA'S SCRUNCHIES

**YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR**

**BOOTH # B 61**



A young entrepreneur with a passion for handmade hair accessories, Janiya uses her sewing machine and a variety of fabrics to create scrunchies with unique designs. Some of her most popular scrunchies feature beloved characters like Bluey, Minnie Mouse, and Yoda. Always on the lookout for new fabrics to match the seasons and holidays, Janiya prepares months in advance, making most of her stock during the summer. Visit Janiya's Scrunchies for a delightful selection of handcrafted hair accessories!

## RHAPSODY HANDCRAFTED

**BOOTH # B 16**

**ON-THEME PRODUCTS**

Specializing in laser-cut and hand-painted items such as hair clips, earrings, car freshies, and accessories, Ally Powers of Rhapsody Handcrafted combines her love of painting and digital design to create unique pieces from wood and acrylic. Her hair clips are a customer favorite, and this year, she features a giant "hair clip wall" with hundreds of designs.



## TYSON'S CRAFT SPOT

BOOTH # P 13

FEST FAVE



Tyson's jewelry is inspired by nature and positive vibes, featuring original designs crafted from high-quality semi-precious stones, glass beads, and intricate wire-wrapping techniques. From diffuser bracelets and men's symbolic bracelets to the beloved Mama Bird collection, each piece is perfect for gifting or everyday wear. Customizations are available on-site, ensuring an authentic handmade experience.

## SOUTHERN ADDICTION DÉCOR

BOOTH # P 10, P 11, P 12



FEST FAVE

Founded by high school friends reunited after 25 years, Southern Addiction Decor, brings the charm of rustic living to Suwanee Fest. Scott, a talented carpenter, and Lisa, a photographer with a passion for graphic design and woodworking, have combined their skills to create wood home decor, seasonal pieces, and engraved products. With over five years of participation in Suwanee Fest, they are excited to bring back a touch of Southern elegance for your home!

## BARREL WARRIOR

BOOTH # G 14

NEW!



Meet Allen Harrell aka the Barrel Warrior at Suwanee Fest, a retired military veteran who transforms whiskey and wine barrels into unique kitchen, bar, and home decor items. Each piece is meticulously handmade and one-of-a-kind, from Lazy Susans and charcuterie boards to cigar/drink trays and cocktail smokers. Visit Barrel Warrior for unique, handcrafted treasures that support Wounded Warriors and Tunnel to Towers.

## MRS. JONES

BOOTH # Y 25



NEW!

Mrs. JONES Products specializes in a healthful selection of items crafted from Sorrel (Jamaican Hibiscus) and Tamarind. With years of experience farming in South and Central Florida, Mrs. Jones creates Sorrel Preserve, Hibiscus Tea, Sorrel Drink, Tamarind Ball Candy, and Smoked Herring Spread. Sorrel, a superfood rich in antioxidants and essential minerals, is celebrated for its numerous health benefits. Inspired by Suwanee's welcoming community, Mrs. Jones is excited to introduce her products to Georgia and make new friends.

## CUPCAKES BY LISA

BOOTH # R 05

Get ready to satisfy your sweet tooth at Cupcakes by Lisa, where you'll find an assortment of Suwanee's best cupcakes made entirely from scratch with quality ingredients. Known for their delicious butter and cream cheese frostings, Cupcakes by Lisa offers a variety of flavors, including the ever-popular red velvet and new for 2024, Snickerdoodle. This year, they're also expanding their gluten-free options. With a friendly family-run booth, Cupcakes by Lisa promises irresistible treats.



TASTY

# 80's BLOCK PARTY

## FAMILY FUN ZONE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY GWINNETT CHURCH

SATURDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 21  
10 AM – 7 PM

SUNDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 22  
NOON – 5 PM

Yo! We need the rad-ist, bad-ist kiddos in Suwanee to meet us at the Block Party, located on the west side of Town Center Avenue.

Your little dudes and dudettes can make a pet rock, hit up the “tubular” 80’s-transformation station, jam out in a freeze dance competition with friends, and dive into the totally awesome, fan-favorite sandbox!

Word!

Don’t have a cow, there will be photo opportunities and roaming performers! Family Fun Zone area was created for our younger Suwanee Fest visitors; all activities are complimentary.

### RIDES & GAMES

Suwanee Fest also features a massive ride and games area, providing non-stop fun for kids of all ages. Tickets are available for purchase at the festival for inflatables, small rides, and carnival-style games.

#### RIDES & GAMES SCHEDULE

SATURDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 21

Rides open at 10 am and close at 7 pm.,  
Ticket sales end at 6:30 pm.

SUNDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 22

Rides open at noon and close at 5 pm.  
Ticket sales end at 4:30 pm.

### PARKING & SHUTTLES

Parking is unavailable at Town Center during Suwanee Fest, and traffic in the Town Center area can be congested throughout the festival weekend. Please plan on utilizing the free shuttles for a hassle-free Suwanee Fest parking experience. Off-site festival parking and complimentary shuttles are available at three convenient locations:

#### GREAT SCOTT!

##### Shadowbrook Church

4187 Suwanee Dam Road

\*This lot features wheelchair-accessible shuttles.

#### TALK TO ME, GOOSE.

##### Shawnee North Business Center

305 Shawnee North Drive at Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road

#### BUELLER? BUELLER?

##### Gwinnett Church

300 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard

The air-conditioned shuttles will run from 8 am-8 pm on Saturday, and from 11:30 am-7 pm on Sunday. Please note that bus service will be very limited during the parade, from 8:45 am until approximately 10:30 am on Saturday. Dogs are welcome on the shuttles.





# PLAYTOWN & TOWN CENTER ON MAIN & DELAY NATURE PARK OPEN

The City of Suwanee is pleased to share two new spaces with the community, PlayTown and Town Center on Main & DeLay Nature Park. These spaces are designed to enhance recreational opportunities and provide residents with more outdoor spaces to enjoy.

PlayTown, sponsored by Primerica as a partner in play, is a redesign of the community's favorite park for families and children of all ages. Located off Main Street, the park features innovative playground equipment, shaded picnic areas, and walking trails that invite families to spend quality time outdoors. Designed with safety and accessibility in mind, PlayTown offers a welcoming environment for everyone in the community.

Town Center on Main & DeLay Nature Park, an extension of the thriving Town Center Park, expands the city's commitment to creating vibrant public spaces. This new park includes open lawns, reflecting pools, and an elevated walkway. Town Center on Main complements the bustling activity of nearby Town Center.

Mayor Jimmy Burnette emphasized the importance of these new greenspaces: "Our city has always valued the role of parks in creating a strong, connected community. PlayTown and Town Center on Main are the latest additions to our growing network of parks, offering more opportunities for residents to come together and enjoy the outdoors."

Both parks have been developed with input from community members and are part of Suwanee's ongoing efforts to provide high-quality recreational spaces that cater to the needs of its growing population. As the city continues to expand, these parks will play a key role in maintaining Suwanee's reputation as a livable, family-friendly community.





## A Conversation with *Denise Brinson*

As the Assistant City Manager of Suwanee, Denise Brinson oversees all economic development, communications, marketing, events, public art, and "all things fun" for the city. With over 25 years of service, Denise has been instrumental in shaping Suwanee's growth and community engagement. A resident since 1998, Denise's two children grew up in the North Gwinnett cluster, deeply connecting her to the community she serves.

Denise has been involved with Town Center on Main from its inception, acting as the lead liaison between the city's vision and the park's design and construction. This project marked a new challenge for her, as she guided the park's development from planning through to completion, ensuring it aligns with Suwanee's long-term vision for a vibrant downtown area.

### How does Town Center on Main fit into the broader vision for Suwanee's downtown area?

Around 2000, the City of Suwanee completed a series of key planning documents: the Comprehensive Plan, the Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment, and the initial Downtown Master Plan. One of the significant insights from the Open Space Plan was that Suwanee was underserved in terms of open space. While Gwinnett County provides excellent recreational facilities for our residents, we recognized the need for more passive parks within the city.

To address this, the city identified the necessity of acquiring land, which led to the 2001 bond referendum. The citizens of Suwanee approved a \$17.7 million bond for land acquisition and open space. This funding enabled the creation of several key parks, including Town Center Park, Sims Lake Park, and Suwanee Creek Park, and now the development of Town Center on Main & DeLay Nature Park.

Through extensive community input, we decided to use a portion of the 25 acres acquired as an urban park and an expansion of Town Center Park. The remaining portion of the land is now DeLay Nature Park, home to the Brushy Creek Greenway. Additionally, Station Park was renovated, recognizing its role as a connection to the two larger urban spaces. The vision and leadership from that time have set the stage for the vibrant, interconnected community spaces we have today.

### Can you describe the planning process for Town Center on Main?

Town Center Park has long been Suwanee's primary gathering space and the city's "front door," a visionary concept at the time of its creation. For many, including myself, it's the backdrop to countless core memories—from family events and dinners to simply hanging out with friends, and of course the dozens of community events hosted in Town Center Park.

The planning process for Town Center on Main began in 2015, with the design being finalized by 2017. After securing funding and selecting a construction team, we were ready to move forward. However, the COVID-19 pandemic introduced significant uncertainty, leading to a temporary pause in the project. By September 2022, we regrouped and made the decision to proceed with construction, reaffirming our commitment to expanding and enhancing the space that holds so much importance to our community.





## How does the park complement the existing Town Center Park?

Town Center on Main is an expansion of Town Center's most beloved features while introducing new elements to enhance the overall experience. Town Center Park's expansive lawn area is one of its most utilized spaces, and Town Center on Main builds on this by offering a generously expansive lawn designed for interpretive play. However, Town Center on Main adds distinct features that set it apart, such as a food truck park created in partnership with local entrepreneurs Angie and Jose Hevia, the former owners of Cheeky's. This area is soon to be complete with a beverage station and seating introducing a commercial element that encourages people to gather and enjoy the park in a relaxed, social environment. The park's design provides a walkable, safe space where visitors of all ages can hang out, play, and connect.

## What are some of the standout features of Town Center on Main that you are most excited about?

Town Center on Main is beyond a typical park. A particularly exciting addition is the elevated walkway, which offers visitors a different perspective of the park and a unique experience compared to other parks. This elevated feature is especially stunning at night, with the lighting around the park creating an inviting atmosphere. Another favorite feature is the reading grotto in front of the library, offering a peaceful retreat that is beautifully lit for evening visits. Additionally, the park includes volleyball courts and the newly revamped PlayTown Suwanee, making it a diverse recreational space for all ages. The view of the Veterans Memorial from the walkway and the absence of a traditional stage—keeping larger events to Town Center Park—ensure that Town Center on Main is a versatile and thoughtfully designed complement to the community.

On Thursday, June 20, the City of Suwanee hosted a private event that provided over 200 guests with an exclusive first look at the stunning new park developments, Town Center on Main and DeLay Nature Park. Presented by Northside Hospital, this special occasion celebrated the success of the Art for All campaign, which surpassed its goal by raising over \$1.25 million. Attendees enjoyed an evening of exploration and appreciation as they previewed the beautifully designed spaces that promise to become central hubs for community engagement and outdoor recreation in Suwanee.



Jay Dennard, FACHE, FHFMA, CPXP, is the Chief Operating Officer for Northside Hospital Duluth's campus and the Vice President of Physician Services for Northside Gwinnett & Duluth.



**SUWANEЕ NAMED ONE OF THE  
BEST PLACES TO LIVE  
FOR FAMILIES  
BY FORTUNE**

The City of Suwanee is proud to have been named in Fortune's Top 50 Best Places to Live for Families in the United States. Ranking 27th out of over 2,000 cities analyzed and the number one city in Georgia, this recognition highlights Suwanee's commitment to creating a community that not only supports families in the present but also serves them in the long term.

Fortune's annual list evaluates cities based on education, resources for aging adults, general wellness, financial health, and livability. Fortune said, "With a growing portion of Americans caring for both children and aging parents, more people want to live in cities where multigenerational families can thrive."

Suwanee, a charming suburb northeast of the Atlanta metro area, stands out for its balance of historic charm and modern amenities. The city's commitment to community and culture has garnered national recognition, highlighted by the revitalization of Old Town Suwanee, which features a 56-acre historic district. The bustling storefronts of the downtown Town Center corridor further contribute to the city's energetic atmosphere. Additionally, Suwanee is celebrated for its family-friendly festivals, which bring the community together throughout the year.

Fitness enthusiasts enjoy the Suwanee Running Series and the abundance of passive parks and trails. Art lovers can appreciate the city's dedication to public art through SculptTour and its Art for All campaign, which has raised over \$1.25 million to support new public artworks in Suwanee's newest park, Town Center on Main. The City also supports the Suwanee Arts Center which doubles as the city's Welcome Center.

Suwanee's diverse population benefits from a robust healthcare system. Four hospitals are within 10 miles, ensuring quality care is always accessible. The city's public schools, part of the award-winning Gwinnett County Public Schools, are highly rated and provide excellent educational opportunities.

Mayor Jimmy Burnette expressed pride in the city's recognition, stating, "Suwanee's inclusion in Fortune's Best Places to Live for Families is a testament to our community's dedication to creating a welcoming, connected, and thriving environment for all residents. We are committed to continuing this tradition of excellence and making Suwanee a place where families can live, grow, and prosper together."

Beginning in October...  
**Suwanee Farmers  
Market is**

*Mooving*

**Find us in our new location at  
Town Center on Main  
(near the library)**

**Winter Market Dates**

October 12 & 26  
November 9 & 23  
December 14 & 21  
January 11 & 25  
February 8 & 22  
March 8 & 22  
April 12 & 26

**9:00 -  
11:00 a.m.**



**Discover Exciting  
Fall Activities  
& Exhibits**

**at Suwanee Welcome Center  
& Art Center**

As the fall season approaches, Suwanee Welcome Center & Art Center has an array of activities and exhibits to inspire and engage the community.

- **Photography Exhibit**
- **Small Works Exhibit**
- **Hand-Building Pottery Classes**
- **Bob Ross Painting Series**
- **Tuesday Tea**



Visit the Suwanee Art Center website for more information on exhibits, classes, and community events.  
**suwaneeartscenter.org**

Suwanee Mayor Jimmy Burnette was recently installed as the 3rd Vice President of the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) on Sunday, June 23. This appointment was made in front of a crowd of city administrators, state officials, and local officials at the association's annual convention held in Savannah, Georgia. As 3rd Vice President, Mayor Burnette will play a vital role in supporting the GMA, which serves 536 cities across Georgia through legislative advocacy and strategic initiatives.

The Georgia Municipal Association is a non-profit organization committed to the advocacy and support of municipal governments in the state. The GMA provides an array of supportive services, including legislative advocacy, educational programs, employee benefits, and consulting services. These resources are designed to aid cities as they strive to become more innovative, effective, and responsive. Suwanee is thrilled to have Mayor Burnette contributing to these efforts on the GMA leadership team.

*Suwanee Mayor Jimmy Burnette*  
**Named 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President**  
 of Georgia Municipal Association.



For more information about the GMA and its work, visit [www.gacities.com](http://www.gacities.com).

**CITY NAMES THE 2024-25**  
**Suwanee Youth Leaders Class**



The City of Suwanee recently named the members of its ninth Suwanee Youth Leaders (SYL) class. These students were chosen based on their strong applications, recommendations from teachers and school administrators, and extracurricular resumes.

SYL is a nine-month leadership program for high school sophomores and juniors living within the North Gwinnett, Peachtree Ridge, or Collins Hill clusters. Participants gain exposure to local initiatives and community and civic leaders while allowing the city to engage with young leaders. The class will also be involved in planning and implementing a citywide event and a community service Cheers Project.

*Congratulations* to the Suwanee Youth Leaders Class of 2024-25

Elsie Aidoo  
 Soha Alimohammed  
 Amber Andani  
 Riley Anderson  
 Rachael Anderson  
 Julia Andrews  
 Jiya Bhagat  
 Jude Brautigan  
 Stella Bridges  
 Emma Calin  
 Shane  
 Chailektrattanakul  
 Norah Deaton  
 Christopher Doucette  
 Yashal Fatima  
 Yuri Fujii  
 Prajit Geetha Gurusamy

Kendal Godfrey  
 Avery Grant  
 Sophie Han  
 Bela Hargis  
 Marit Harvey  
 Ziya Hasnani  
 Sherman Ho  
 Kimi Holmes  
 Adrienne Huynh  
 Arlen Ibe  
 Olivia Ji  
 Inaaya Kajani  
 Aarina Kanani  
 Calvin Kang  
 Max Kim  
 Sean Kim  
 Joyce Lee

Kaylee Li  
 Jason Li  
 Riki Lin  
 Gia Mani  
 Simran Mohamed  
 Larkyn Mooney  
 Michelle Navarro  
 Elliot Nguyen  
 Minh Nguyen  
 Jina Park  
 Mansi Patel  
 Anya Phillips  
 Payton Pritchett  
 Mehapoorani Sakthivel  
 Preslee Sammons  
 Aria Shah  
 Brandon Shin  
 Catherine Shin

Lois Sim  
 Sadhana Singam  
 Pauline Sriin  
 Doussou Sylla  
 Vivian Tang  
 Katherina Traykova  
 Kat Tschan  
 Sophia Wang  
 Rehani Wijeratne  
 Andrew Xie  
 Elisabeth Yam  
 Jiawen Yang  
 Tiffany Yuan  
 Darren Yuan  
 Dylan Zhou  
 Roy Zou

## FY 2025 CITY OF SUWANEЕ BUDGET ASSUMES MILLAGE TO REMAIN AT 4.93, SAME AS PAST TWELVE YEARS

The City of Suwanee began the new fiscal (budget) year on July 1, 2024, with a \$19.0 million balanced operating budget. This year's budget represents a six-and-a-half percent increase in operating expenditure compared to the amended FY 2024 budget.

Suwanee's \$19.0 million FY 2025 budget includes:

- 122 full-time and 8 part-time positions, including two new full-time positions
- Judges and Solicitors rate adjustment, \$26,400
- 3.0 percent group health insurance renewal
- Continued electric vehicle transition, one administration fleet vehicle, \$50,000
- Classification and compensation study, \$45,000

- Additional operating cost for Town Center on Main, \$300,000
- Facilities landscaping and right-of-way maintenance, \$430,000
- Vehicle, parks, and building repairs, \$340,000
- Capital funding, \$612,000

After analyzing the 2024 tax consolidation information provided by Gwinnett County, the City of Suwanee has adopted a budget that assumes that the millage rate will remain at 4.93 mills, the same rate adopted by the City for the past twelve years. This proposed millage rate of 4.93 is a rollback millage rate increase of .328 mills, a 7.13 percent increase in property taxes based on market value growth. Property taxes, one of the chief sources of revenue for the City, are collected based on the millage rate.

Visit [Suwanee.com](http://Suwanee.com) to view the City of Suwanee's FY 2025 budget.

## GET READY FOR ROUND 2: The Suwanee & Sugar Hill FOOD FIGHT IS BACK!



It's time to roll up your sleeves, Suwanee! The Suwanee & Sugar Hill Food Fight is back for a second round, and this year, we're determined to take the crown—and support a great cause while doing it!

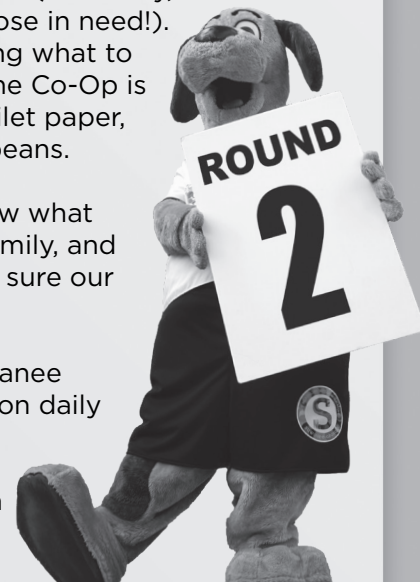
Starting September 21 at Suwanee Fest and wrapping up October 22 at Sugar Rush, we'll be going head-to-head with Sugar Hill to see which city can collect the heaviest haul of donations for the North Gwinnett Co-Op. Last year, Sugar Hill narrowly squeaked by, but this year, we know Suwanee can rally to bring the trophy home!

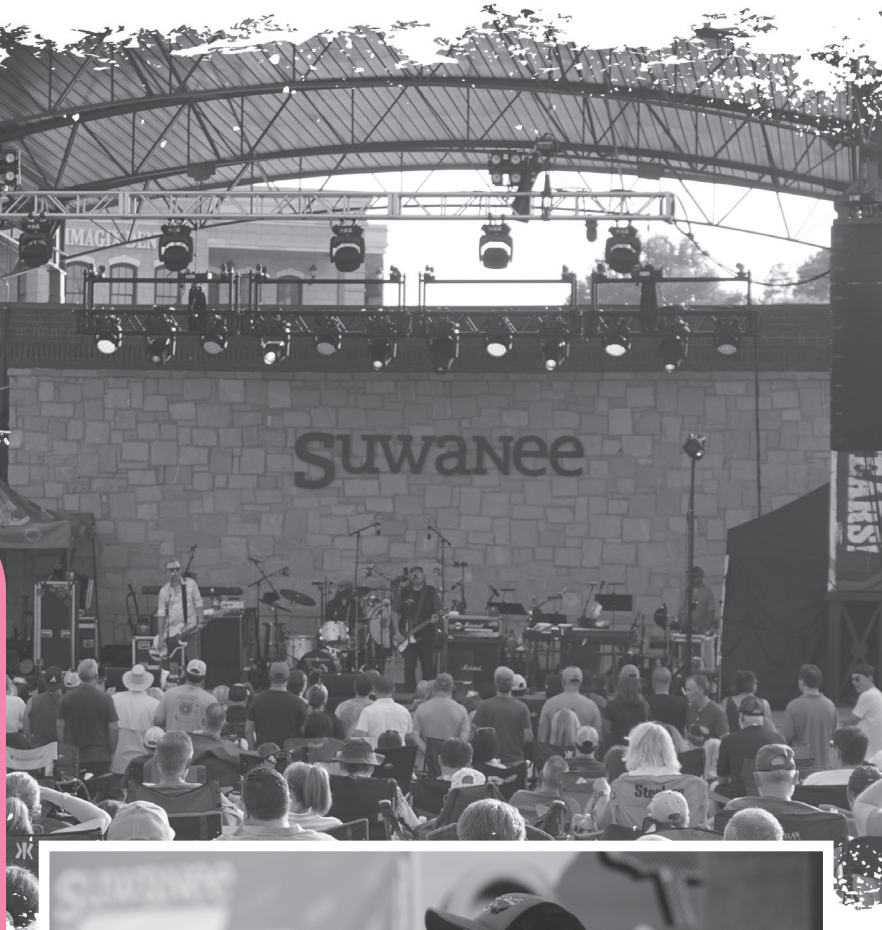
Here's the deal: The city with the most donations by weight will be declared the WINNER (but really, the community wins big by helping those in need!). And don't worry if you're wondering what to donate—we've got you covered. The Co-Op is always in need of essentials like toilet paper, paper towels, cereal, and canned beans.

So, Suwanee, let's step up and show what we're made of! Get your friends, family, and neighbors involved, and let's make sure our community shines the brightest.

Donations will be collected at Suwanee Fest, City Hall, and the Police Station daily September 21 through October 22.

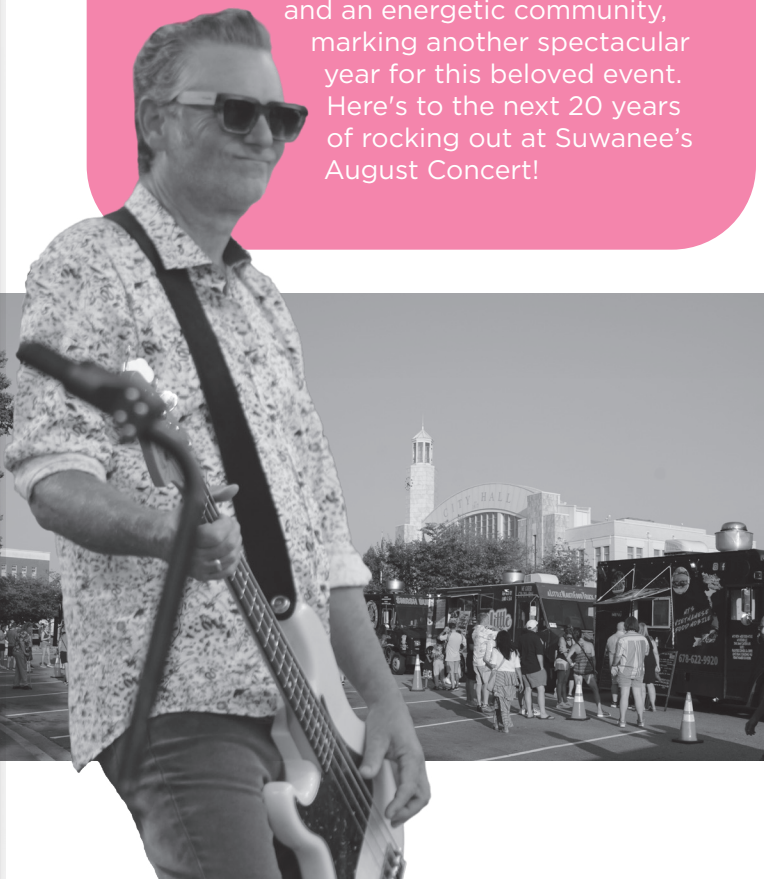
Let's do this, Suwanee—because in this Food Fight, everyone wins!





Suwannee's 20th annual August Concert drew a large crowd to Town Center Park on August 10 for an unforgettable show. All within earshot were thrilled by electric performances from Drivin N Cryin, who returned to the Suwannee stage after headlining the inaugural concert two decades ago, and the iconic 10,000 Maniacs, who captivated the audience with triple platinum hits like "Like the Weather" and "These Are Days."

Attendees enjoyed a variety of food and drinks from local vendors, including A Little Nauti Food Truck, Southern Grace, and Taza Lebanese Kitchen. The night was filled with great music, delicious eats, and an energetic community, marking another spectacular year for this beloved event. Here's to the next 20 years of rocking out at Suwannee's August Concert!



## UPCOMING EVENTS

official newsletter of the city of suwanee, georgia

### SEPTEMBER 24

<b>2</b>	Labor Day - City Hall Closed	8:00 am
<b>3</b>	Planning Commission Meeting	6:30 pm
<b>7</b>	Suwanee Farmers Market	8:00 am
<b>9</b>	Suwanee Fest Planning Meeting	6:00 pm
<b>10</b>	Harvest Farm Managing Board	6:00 pm
<b>11</b>	Public Arts Commission Meeting	6:00 pm
<b>12</b>	City Council Workshop	5:30 pm
<b>14</b>	Care for Cops 5K	8:00 am
<b>14</b>	Suwanee Farmers Market	8:00 am
<b>17</b>	Downtown Development Authority	7:30 am
<b>17</b>	Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting	6:30 pm
<b>21</b>	Suwanee Fest	9:00 am
<b>22</b>	Suwanee Fest	Noon
<b>24</b>	City Council Meeting	6:30 pm
<b>28</b>	Suwanee Farmers Market	8:00 am

### OCTOBER 24

<b>1</b>	Planning Commission Meeting	6:30 pm
<b>5</b>	Suwanee Taste of BBQ & Music Festival	10:00 am
<b>8</b>	Motul Petit Le Mans Kickoff Party	6:00 pm
<b>8</b>	Harvest Farm Managing Board	6:00 pm
<b>9</b>	Public Arts Commission Meeting	6:00 pm
<b>10</b>	City Council Workshop	5:30 pm
<b>12</b>	Suwanee Farmers Market	9:00 am
<b>12</b>	Spooky Spirits 5K	11:00 am
<b>15</b>	Downtown Development Authority	7:30 am
<b>15</b>	Zoning Board of Appeals	6:30 pm
<b>19</b>	African American Cultural & Arts Festival	Noon
<b>22</b>	City Council Meeting	6:30 pm
<b>26</b>	Walk to End Alzheimer's	9:00 am
<b>26</b>	Suwanee Farmers Market	9:00 am
<b>26</b>	Dinner & a Boovie	5:00 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  
Larry Pettiford 678/464-3651

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.

**CITY MANAGER** Marty Allen 770/945-8996  
**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER** Denise Brinson 770/904-3385  
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**FINANCIAL SERVICES** Amie Sakmar 770/904-2797  
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