



Oconee County Connections Employee Newsletter

Volume 3, No. 8 August 2021

A photograph of a modern building with a white facade and a long porch, identified as the Oconee Heritage Park. The building is surrounded by green grass and trees. The text "OCONEE HERITAGE PARK" is visible above the entrance.

Around the County Senior Center Expansion Groundbreaking

The Oconee County Senior Center hosted a groundbreaking ceremony on Tuesday, July 27, to mark the official start of construction on a major expansion for the center. The project will add a health and wellness center, as well as additional space for arts and recreational activities, to serve the center's growing clientele. An additional 2,400 square feet will accommodate expanded programming that will provide respite to family caregivers, enrich the lives of older adults living with dementia, and increase available space for a variety of activities. Construction is expected to be complete in the fall of 2022.



The Senior Center received a \$750,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the state Department of Community Affairs for the expansion.

"We are excited to begin work on this project," said Senior Center Director Merry Howard, "and we are looking forward to being able to offer even more programming and events to our participants."

Employment Anniversaries

Congratulations to everyone on our team celebrating another year of service to the residents of Oconee County! Thank you for making our organization an outstanding place to work and for your dedication to our community! We appreciate all that you do!

Administration

Tracye Bailey 08/10/1998

Board of Elections & Registration

Jennifer Stone 08/29/2016

Civic Center

Paul Helphenstine 08/20/2012

Clerk of Courts

Angie Elder-Johnson 08/31/1987

Jessica Hart 08/14/2002

Marti Hardigree 08/06/2007

Communications

Diane Baggett 08/13/2018

Human Resources

Jill Faulkner 08/10/2016

Information Technology

Patrick Magana 08/07/2007

Jail

Jason Colquitt 08/29/2006

Joshua Morgan 08/15/2016

Law Enforcement

Kandy Marchman 08/06/2001

Quinton NeSmith 08/05/2013

Adam Thrower 08/05/2013

Operations - Facilities/Maintenance

Cristy Prince 08/08/2016

Todd Jackson 08/08/2016

Parks & Recreation

Whitney Sperlik 08/03/2003

Ramad Hunter 08/20/2003

Don Oliver 08/09/2010

John Joiner 08/07/2018

Melody Rivers 08/24/2020

Planning/Code Enforcement

Grace Tuschak 08/27/2018

Property Appraisal

Amanda Shelton 08/04/2014

Public Safety

Bruce Thaxton 08/11/1997

Russ Henson 08/31/2004

Robert Elder 08/01/2005

C.J. Worden 08/31/2017

Public Works

Michael Wayne Weathers 08/09/1993

Eric Lambert 08/17/2009

Richard White 08/31/2009

Charlotte Connell 08/04/2014

Nicholas Belcher 08/29/2016

Senior Center

Mary Hall 08/08/2016

Kathy Shanks 08/14/2017

Superior Court

Walker McNiff 08/01/2016

Tax Commissioner

Amanda Mauldin 08/15/2016

Water Resouces

Chad Wolhert 08/10/2020

Faces of Oconee County Government

Tim Rice

Meet Tim Rice, Water Quality Supervisor for Oconee County Water Resources. Tim joined Oconee County in November 2020, bringing seventeen years of experience in water treatment and utilities with the City of Monroe.

Tim lives in Madison and attended Morgan County High School where he met his wife Nicole. The two will celebrate their 27th wedding anniversary in September. Tim and Nicole's family includes their daughter Hannah, son Tyler and his fiancé Chloe, son Jacob and his wife Katie, and granddaughter Addison Grace.

When Tim is not working with the Water Resources team, he enjoys participating in wrestling, promoting independent wrestling, and putting on a great show. He is also an ordained deacon.

Tim says that his favorite part of his job is being able interact with the public and help set their minds at ease whenever any issues arise. He also enjoys working with his fellow employees and being part of a team that supports one another.

“Service is what I do,” Tim says.

“Tim Rice has been an outstanding addition to our team,” says Oconee County Water Resources Director Tim Durham. “He is dependable, a team-player and very knowledgeable about water quality. He is also has outstanding customers service skills. Tim is essential to our success and he has a good grasp of where we are headed as a department. Everyone please welcome him!”

Thank you, Tim, for all you do for Oconee County!



Welcome!

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest colleague - we are so glad you have joined us!

Animal Services

Amanda Parker

GIS

Nicole Williams

Jail

Quintin Lowder
Scotty Bodie

Law Enforcement

Derrell Mohorn
Christopher Haag
Hannah Redford
Alex Helsper

Parks & Recreation

Jacob Rawlings
Laura Ferguson

Water Resources

John Middlebrooks

Notes from IT

Cybersecurity Tips While Traveling

1. Software updates: make sure your devices have been updated with the latest patches before you leave home. Keeping your apps and operating system up to date helps protect you from the latest malware.
2. Automatic Connectivity: Turn off automatic connectivity. It is a cool feature but when you are traveling you do not want your device to automatically connect to any available device. You do not know if that device has the latest patches applied to it and if it is vulnerable. Select what devices you want to connect to. Do not use auto connect.
3. Passwords: Always use strong passwords and do not select 'remember my password'. If someone was able to successfully get into your device, they could easily get into any application where you have saved your password.
4. Public Wireless Networks: It is okay to use a public wireless network, only if you are using it to connect your VPN (virtual private network) which should be secured.
5. Location Sharing: Be careful about sharing your location on social media. Criminals can track where you are and possibly steal your valuables while you are away.



Enjoy your travels! Be safe and aware of your surroundings. -Paula Nedza, IT Director

Employee Birthdays

Happy Birthday to everyone in the Oconee County Government Family celebrating a birthday this month! You have our best wishes for a wonderful day, and we hope it's the start of a fantastic year!

| | |
|--------------------|-------|
| Stephen Guest | 08/01 |
| James Bradford | 08/02 |
| Justin Baldwin | 08/05 |
| Mark Von Kutzleben | 08/05 |
| Todd Gabriel | 08/06 |
| John Hanley | 08/06 |
| Sheletha Pope | 08/07 |
| Neang Smith | 08/07 |
| Liz Smith | 08/08 |
| Shawn Corbin | 08/09 |
| Bobby Reno | 08/09 |
| Chris Shook | 08/09 |
| Nick Hensley | 08/10 |
| Robert Thompson | 08/10 |
| Mike Compton | 08/11 |
| Sonny Browning | 08/16 |
| Rolland Ebright | 08/16 |
| Ramad Hunter | 08/16 |
| Paula Nedza | 08/16 |
| Whitney Sperlik | 08/16 |
| Jennifer Stone | 08/16 |
| Kelli Bardner | 08/17 |
| Deanna Ruark | 08/20 |
| Marge McKee | 08/22 |
| Marla Brown | 08/25 |
| Andy Dunston | 08/26 |
| Russell Ruggieri | 08/26 |
| William McCarthy | 08/29 |
| Erin Carlton | 08/30 |
| Matthew Pilcher | 08/31 |



Oconee Connections Employee Newsletter is published monthly by the Office of Communications. We want to hear from you! Please e-mail us with your department news, as well as employee announcements of births, engagements, weddings, and retirements. Please submit news items to dbaggett@oconee.ga.us by the 15th of the month prior to publication for inclusion in the newsletter. The Office of Communications reserves the right to edit all submissions for clarity and length.