



Oconee County Connections Employee Newsletter

Volume 5, No. 1

January 2023

Best Wishes for the New Year!

Thank you for making 2022 a great year for
Oconee County Government!

We are grateful to each and every one of you
for all that you do every single day, for going
above and beyond, and for working together as
an amazing team, and we want to wish you the
very best in the coming year!

May your 2023 be a year of unbounded
possibility, adventure, and happiness!



Annual Holiday Luncheon

The end of the year brought another festive holiday gathering - thank you to everyone who could join us and thank you to the amazing committee that made it all happen!

Holiday Luncheon Committee:

Shawn Wheeler
Justin Kirouac
Jill Faulkner
Whitney Sperlik
Holly Stephenson
Alex Newell
Susan Tidwell
Tiffany Norton
Amanda Shelton
Pat Sebring
Debbie Smith
Brandy Ervin
Lisa Bowman
Amanda Mauldin
Denise Bradshaw
Shawna Benson
Crystal Berisko
Beth Armstrong

And, a special shout out to the Civic Center staff, the Commissioners for helping judge the door contest, Maggie Polson, and everyone that helped make this a fabulous event!



Annual Holiday Luncheon



Oconee Parks Foundation Earns Award

Georgia Recreation and Park Association presented the Oconee Parks Foundation the Volunteer Award for 2022.

Oconee Parks Foundation is a volunteer-led nonprofit organization promoting investment in OCPRD park facilities and recreation programs. OPF Board Members include: Jeanne Barsanti, Philip Bernardi, Eric Gattiker, MaryBeth Guest, Rachael Killingsworth, Kimberly Liebowitz, Lindsey McKinney and Dan Moore.

To learn more about OPF, go to <https://www.facebook.com/OconeeParksFoundation>.



Welcome!

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

Sanitation

Jamie Howe



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!

Clerk of Courts

Angela Elder-Johnson
Jenna Pulliam

01/01/2001
01/24/2022

Property Appraisal

Chris Neal

01/14/2013

Coroner

Ed Carson

01/01/2009

Public Works

Michael Sutton

01/17/1995

E-911

Yashica West

01/19/2016

Senior Center

Shirley Finch

01/28/2013

EMS Operations

Facilities/Operations

Fabian Huizar
Jeremy Register

01/04/2021
01/24/2022

Superior Court

Jennifer Parker
Mandi Ellis
Kelli Bardner
Marcy Jolles

01/03/2017
01/01/2019
01/01/2019
01/03/2022

Jail

Todd Gabriel
Matthew Towe

01/11/2008
01/13/2020

Tax Commissioner

Jennifer Riddle

01/01/2006

Law Enforcement

Mark Smith
Kenji Dorsey

01/25/2010
01/01/2017

Tourism & Visitors Bureau

Joann Hubert

01/21/2020

Parks & Recreation

Chris Cotton

01/10/2011

Notes from IT

Securing Your Home Network

Computers, tablets, smartphones, TVs, thermostats, cameras, doorbells, and coffee pots. What do all these things have in common? They are all devices that connect to your home network and the internet. Modems and routers act as the gateway between your devices and the internet. Without proper security in place, you can leave the door open for attackers to access and take over your network.

Let's review some steps you can take to keep your home network safe from potential cyber threats.

Secure Your Modem and Router

- Use current hardware. Technology changes quickly, and if the manufacturer no longer supports your modem and router, a security vulnerability may emerge and not receive a fix. Whether you purchase your own modem and router or lease them through your internet service provider (ISP), consider replacing them at least every five years to ensure your devices receive the support and security fixes you need to keep your home network safe.
- Use a surge protector or uninterruptible power supply (UPS). Prevent potential damage to your modem and router from unexpected power surges, spikes, and lightning strikes by connecting them to a surge protector or UPS. Some models also include surge protection for phone, ethernet, and coaxial cables.
- Disable remote management. Some routers have the capability for you to manage your home network over the internet. While this does add convenience, it also increases the risk that an attacker will compromise your network. Disable remote management by default, and if you absolutely need it, be sure to enable multi-factor authentication (MFA) to use this feature.
- Change your modem and router passwords from the default passwords to secure passwords. Changing default passwords will prevent others from accessing the configuration, changing settings, and gaining visibility into your network.
- Enable automatic updates and install the latest firmware. Keeping your modem and router up to date with the latest firmware helps protect them as new vulnerabilities emerge and receive fixes.
- Enable the router's firewall. The firewall helps prevent the devices on your network from accessing malicious sites as well as keeps outsiders on the outside of your network.
- Enable website filtering. Some routers have website filtering and parental controls as added features to prevent users from accessing malicious or inappropriate websites while on your network. If your router does not have these features built-in, you can set up free internet Domain Name System (DNS) filtering through services such as quad9, CleanBrowsing, or OpenDNS.
- Reboot your modem and router at least once a month. Malicious software can infect your router without your knowledge. Periodically reboot your modem and router to clear potentially malicious software from memory, refresh your device connections, and keep your internet connection healthy and fast.

Notes from IT

Secure Your Wi-Fi

- Change the Wi-Fi network name (SSID). The default wireless network name is typically the brand of the router. As such, it can provide clues to outsiders as to what type of router you are using and what vulnerabilities exist. Make sure you do not use your name, home address, or other personal information in your new SSID name. For added protection, disable broadcast of the wireless network name.
- Enable Wi-Fi encryption. Use Wi-Fi Protected Access 3 (WPA3) if supported by your device and choose a strong passphrase to connect devices to your network. When feasible, choose wired connections over wireless for enhanced security.
- Enable a Wi-Fi guest network. A security best practice is to segregate network devices. Connect your computers, mobile devices, printers, and other trusted devices on your primary wireless network. Additionally, restricting devices such as smart TVs, personal digital assistants, and your refrigerator to the guest network.



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!

Ryan Kellner	01/01	Julianna Minton	01/14
Stephen Wilson	01/02	Melissa Braswell	01/16
Abigail Ryder	01/03	Ginger Thrasher	01/16
DonL Bearden	01/06	Bruce Thaxton	01/17
Chris Neal	01/07	Krista Dorsey	01/19
Amelia Willis	01/08	Allison Burns	01/21
Adam Layfield	01/09	Jordan Silvey	01/22
Charles Arlt	01/10	Julie Jackson	01/23
Joshua Dudley	01/10	Jeremy Wasdin	01/24
Marcy Jolles	01/10	Michael Downs	01/27
Jackie Rowell	01/12	Migdai Marin	01/27
Robert Perrin	01/13	Eric Norris	01/28
Dwayne Collins	01/14	Jessica Ellis	01/30
		Scott Underwood	01/30



Notes from HR

2023 Human Resources Calendar

Add these dates to your 2023 calendar!

Holidays

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
January 16

Memorial Day
May 29

Independence Day
July 4

Labor Day
September 4

Thanksgiving
November 23 & 24

Christmas Eve & Day
December 25 & 26

JANUARY 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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29	30	31				

FEBRUARY 2023						
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MARCH 2023						
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APRIL 2023						
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30						

MAY 2023						
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JUNE 2023						
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JULY 2023						
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AUGUST 2023						
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SEPTEMBER 2023						
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OCTOBER 2023						
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NOVEMBER 2023						
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DECEMBER 2023						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Dates in **GREEN** are paydays. Dates in **BLUE** are County observed holidays.

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.