

Oconee County Connections

Employee Newsletter



Volume 7, No. 11

November 2025

Customer Service Superstar

Congrats to David Compton

Pumpkin Contest Winner

Congrats Finance Department

Bat Festival Photos

Great evening at Heritage Park!

Employee Pet Corner

A tribute to Shawna's hedgehog "Kiwi"

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Customer Service Superstar

Congratulations to David Compton with the Facilities Department for receiving the Customer Service Superstar Award!

David's professionalism and dedication to excellence are evident in everything he does. He consistently goes above and beyond to support both customers and coworkers.

Facilities Director Bobby Reno said, "David takes pride in his work and has grown tremendously as a technician. I'm proud of his accomplishments and enjoy working with him every day."

Thank you, David, for your outstanding service and commitment to Oconee County!



Welcome to the Team

Welcome to Oconee County! We are glad you are joining our team.

Parks and Rec
Brady Jordan

Sheriff's Office
Nathan Koep

Human Resources Scoop

Upcoming Events and Holidays

November 14 - Health Fair

Watch for an email coming soon for registration with Sign-Up Genius!

If you have any questions about any of the events listed here reach out to Human Resources at 706-769-3938 or email Jill Faulkner at jfaulkner@oconee.ga.us.

November 27 & 28 - Thanksgiving

Oconee County Government will be closed November 27 and 28 to observe the Thanksgiving holiday.

December 5 - Employee Holiday Luncheon

Mark your calendars! The Annual Employee Holiday Luncheon is scheduled for Friday, December 5, from noon to 2 p.m. at the Oconee County Civic Center, and we want to see you there. Don't forget to come dressed in your best holiday sweater to enter the Ugliest Christmas Sweater Contest!

December 24 & 25 - Christmas Eve/Day

Oconee County Government will be closed December 24 and 25 to observe the Christmas holiday.

January 1 - New Year's Day

Oconee County Government will be closed January 1 for New Years Day.



Open Enrollment and Wellness Points

Please ensure all your wellness points are entered by the end of November. A total of 450 points is required.

Watch for upcoming emails regarding open enrollment for insurance in November. Additional information will be provided soon.

For any questions, please contact Beth or Jill at 706-769-3938 or email at barmstrong@oconee.ga.us or jfaulkner@oconee.ga.us.

Bat Festival Photos

The Second Annual Bat Festival took flight with a turnout of an estimated 295 people at Heritage Park on October 13! Families and bat enthusiasts learned all about our local bat population through fun activities, crafts, and educational displays.

The highlight of the night was the bat walk, where 32 participants went to see bats in their natural habitat at the bat houses stationed around Heritage Park.

The event was hosted by the Oconee County UGA Extension Office in partnership with the Keep Oconee County Beautiful Commission (KOCBC) and the Oconee County Parks and Recreation Department.

Thanks to everyone who helped make it a success and to all who joined us for a night of learning and outdoor fun!



Comms Corner

Welcome to the Communications Corner – let's talk accessibility in Microsoft PowerPoint.

Follow these quick tips to ensure accessible presentations.

1) Use Content Placeholders

Start with an accessible template. Use **View > Slide Master View** to insert, edit and manage content placeholders. All text (except tables and objects with alt text) should display in this pane. This ensures all users have easier access to the text in the slides.

2) Give Each Slide a Unique Title

Slide titles create structure and aid navigation. Keep titles short (use 5-10 words).

3) Add Alt Text to Images and Objects

Use informative and concise alt text descriptions for important graphics or non-text elements.

4) Use Simple Table Structures

Avoid using nested tables, merged or split cells, or blank cells for formatting. Table header rows are essential to provide context to table data.

5) Fill in Document Properties

Open **File > Info > Properties** and enter title, subject, and author in the document's properties.

6) Check the Reading Order

Open **Review > Accessibility Check > Reading Order** tool to verify the order of each slide's content. Note: Reading order may affect object layering.

7) Use the Accessibility Checker Tool

Use the built-in tool in **Review > Check Accessibility** which provides details on potential issues and gives suggestions to correct them.

ADA Quick Tips for PowerPoint

Quick Tips for PowerPoint Presentations

- 1 Use content placeholders
- 2 Give each slide a unique title
- 3 Add alt text to images and objects
- 4 Use simple table structures
- 5 Fill in document properties
- 6 Check the reading order
- 7 Use the Accessibility Checker tool within Powerpoint

Download the
ADA Quickcard for
PowerPoint here!



Pumpkin Contest Winner

Winner of the Pumpkin Contest is...
Finance: Trick or Tweet

Runner- Up: Parks and Rec

Third place: Fleet

Thank you all who participated in the pumpkin decorating contest! The competition was fierce and all the pumpkins were creative and well done!





From the IT Workroom

Yubikeys 101 and Troubleshooting

YubiKeys are small but powerful security devices that help protect our digital identities with two-factor authentication (2FA). Here is a quick guide to using your YubiKey.

How to Use Your YubiKey

1. You will be prompted to use Duo two-factor sign on. Click the **passcode option**.
2. Insert your YubiKey into your device's USB port. Make sure it lights up **green**!
3. Touch the gold disk or button to authenticate.
4. Login to your desktop once it fills in the passcode.

Troubleshooting Help

YubiKey not recognized?

- Try a different USB port or flip the Yubikey orientation.

No response when tapping?

- Ensure your finger is touching the metal contact. Do not hold too long or double-tap.

Authentication fails?

- Confirm caps lock is turned off as the passcode is case sensitive.

Lost your YubiKey?

- Contact IT at ochelpdesk@oconee.ga.us immediately to revoke access and issue a replacement.

[View our Yubikey 101 Guide \(PDF\) here!](#)

Knowledge Cafe - Cyber Security

The next Knowledge Cafe will be held Monday, November 10, at 10 a.m. in the North High Shoals Conference Room in the Administrative Building. Attend in-person or via Teams. All materials and a recording of the class will be available on the [Employee Intranet](#) on the Oconee County website and on the [OC Tech Landing Zone](#).

This month's topic is on Cyber Security. Be sure to stay after for open office hours with our IT Team! Use the QR code below to sign up!



Invasive Species Removal Work Days



Invasive Species Removal Work Days!

The Oconee County Parks and Recreation Department and the Keep Oconee County Beautiful Commission, in partnership with Athens Land Trust and Kel-Mac Saddle Club, are hosting Invasive Species Plant Removal Work Days at Heritage Park. Work days will take place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., weather permitting. Come out and volunteer November 4 or 18 at Heritage Park for Invasive Species Removal Work Days!

Registration is required for this event. [For more information visit the event page on our website.](#) Heritage Park is located at 2543 Macon Highway, Watkinsville.



Employee Pet Corner

In Honor of Kiwi, The Hedgehog!

Shawna Benson, GIS Analyst, sent us this great photo of her pet hedgehog, Kiwi. She dressed him up for a prior Thanksgiving and wants to honor his memory this upcoming Thanksgiving. Her favorite memory of Kiwi was his bathtimes where she would scratch his chin with a toothbrush!

Want your pets to be featured?
Email: sbaird@oconee.ga.us

Employee 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!

Extension Office

Patricia McLaughlin 11/18/2019

Jail

Joan White 11/13/2006
Krista Dorsey 11/29/2021
Susan Carlton-Gordon 11/15/2021

Law Enforcement

Dustin Mines 11/29/2021
Robert Perrin 11/01/2021
Vic Green 11/19/2007

Parks & Recreation

Ethan Barnhart 11/15/2022

Property Appraisal

Brian Bray 11/14/2011

Public Safety

Lee Hiland 11/06/2006
Lisa Park 11/16/2020
Caroline Farmer 11/18/2024

Public Works

Robert Thompson 11/18/2019
Scott Hollars 11/01/2021

Senior Center

Stephen Baker 11/13/2023

Tax Commissioner

Kendra Freeman 11/15/2021

Water Resources

Ginger Thrasher 11/22/2004
Tim Rice 11/02/2020
Tracy Metcalf 11/24/2014

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!

Jean Saint-Preux	11/01	Jon Holden	11/10
Carsun Neubauer	11/02	Haleigh Long	11/10
Laynie Baer	11/04	James Rogers	11/11
Kyler Daigle	11/04	Nicole Gueth	11/13
Christopher Haag	11/05	Lawton Stephens	11/14
William Threlkeld	11/05	Kayla Bennett	11/15
Lisa Davol	11/06	Lanya Scott	11/15
Joshua Johnson	11/07	Guillaume Fielteau	11/16
Annessa Martin	11/07	Noah Webb	11/23
Rachel Smith	11/07	Ed Carson	11/27
Allen Hawkins	11/08	Shelby Gabriel	11/28
Sam Smith	11/08		

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.