

Oconee County Connections

Employee Newsletter



Volume 7, No. 12

December 2025

Bring One for the Chipper

Recycle your trees

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Bring One For the Chipper



Keep Oconee County Beautiful is sponsoring “Bring One for the Chipper 2025,” from December 27, 2025, through January 10, 2026, as part of a statewide effort to recycle Christmas trees. Trees can be dropped off at any of the four Waste/Recycle Sites for collection. Please remove all decorations, lights, and stands. Staff will be offering seed packets and tree saplings in exchange for your tree.

Trees are recycled by chipping them into mulch for use in landscaping, or by using them as fish or animal habitats.

CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

Bring One for the Chipper!

JOIN US THIS SEASON

Welcome to the Team

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

Animal Services
Jessica Burnley

Jail
Chelsea Jones

Human Resources Scoop

Upcoming Events and Holidays

Mark these dates on your calendar!

December 1 - AFLAC Open Enrollment

Schedule through [Sign-Up Genius Link Here.](#)

December 3-11 - Biometrics

December 3 from 7:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Oconee Veterans Park

December 4 from 7:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Administrative Building

December 9 from 7 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
E911/Sheriff's office

December 11 from 7:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Administrative Building

[Sign-Up Genius Link Here.](#)

December 5 - Employee Holiday Luncheon

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. Festive dress is encouraged, but not required.

[Sign-Up Genius Link Here.](#)



December 5 - End of Enrollment Period

Please make sure to have any changes to your health insurance submitted to Human Resources by December 5. Anyone with an FSA account must re-enroll by this date.

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 Year's Day.

Holiday Door Decorating Contest

The Holiday Committee would like to remind all departments/offices to have their doors for the contest decorated by December 5 email door photos to Whitney Sperlik, at wsperlik@oconee.ga.us, by December 9. Emails for employee voting will be sent out December 10, and voting ends December 15. The winner will be announced on December 17.

Health Fair 2025

Thank you to everyone who came out for this year's Health Fair! Congratulations to all of our door prize winners; we hope you enjoy your goodies! Thank you again for helping make the event a success.



Two of the Health Fair drawing winners, Matt Beal and Shawna Benson from GIS!



What to Do When You are Hacked

It is that time of the year again! Here's a quick recap of what to do if you believe your computer has been compromised or hacked. It's important to act quickly and follow the proper steps.

1.) Turn off your computer immediately and unplug it from the wall to prevent further damage.

2.) Contact IT right away by calling 706-310-2923 and report what happened. If possible, also email ochelpdesk@oconee.ga.us.

3.) Wait for IT staff to arrive and do not power the computer back on unless they instruct you to.

Taking these steps helps protect your data and the county's network. Use the PDF link below to have a copy of instructions at your work areas.

What to Do Handout (PDF)

Suspect you have been hacked?

Use this checklist to help you respond quickly.

Turn off your computer and unplug from wall

- Turn off computer
- Unplug power source from wall



Call and E-mail IT

- Call IT at 706-310-2923 and report the situation. Use a nearby coworker's phone or your work cell if needed.
- Email IT at ochelpdesk@oconee.ga.us using a coworker's email or your work cell to give more details to the IT tech.



Wait for an IT staff to arrive

- Wait for IT staff to arrive. Do not turn on computer unless otherwise told by IT staff.



Phone:
706-310-2923

Email:
ochelpdesk@oconee.ga.us

From the IT Workroom

Knowledge Cafe - Desk Phones/FAQs

The next Knowledge Cafe will be held Monday, December 8, 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 Desk Phones and any FAQs you have. Be sure to stay after for open office hours with our IT Team! Use the QR code below to sign up!

IT Knowledge Cafe - December



Watkinsville Christmas Parade

Save the date for the annual Watkinsville Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting, December 7! The theme is Hometown Christmas. Parade starts in downtown Watkinsville at 4 p.m., and the tree lighting starts at 6 p.m.

For all information regarding the event and parade route, please visit the following link: <https://www.cityofwatkinsville.com/203/Christmas-Festivities>.



Employee Pet Corner

Meet Wasabi!

Sarah Baird, Communications Assistant, recently adopted a stray cat named Wasabi! Sarah first found Wasabi hiding under a car in her driveway and quickly fell in love with her sweet personality. After confirming she wasn't micro-chipped or claimed during her stray hold, Sarah decided to give her a forever home. Her name, Wasabi, fits perfectly—she's sweet most of the time but can be just a little spicy!

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!

Finance

Susan Tidwell

12/30/2019

Jail

Julio Soto

12/20/2004

Law Enforcement

Daniel Rainwater

12/24/2024

Dylan Pulliam

12/18/2016

Paul Maxey

12/11/1989

William Lewis

12/27/2023

Parks and Recreation

Chris Cotton

12/10/2007

Public Safety

Shawn Corbin

12/05/2005

Tax Commissioner

Carol McGrath

12/28/2020

Water Resources

Adam Layfield

12/08/2014

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!

Chad Skelton	12/01	Pam Morris	12/16
Lofton Tidwell	12/01	Jeff Riddle	12/16
David Gueth	12/03	Scott Hollars	12/17
Sunny Wallace-Burchett	12/06	Joshua Fowler	12/18
Tammy Gilstrap	12/08	Madison Moore	12/18
Jason Toledo	12/08	Taylor Howell	12/19
Nathan Koep	12/10	Lesia Weaber	12/19
John Mobley	12/12	Cheryl Newell	12/21
Joan Postero	12/12	Shayne Stone	12/22
Gregory Harrison	12/13	Michael Hunsinger	12/27
Ponder Suto	12/14	Travis Wooster	12/29
Evelyn King	12/15	Julio Soto	12/30
Michael Ward	12/15	Mandi Ellis	12/31

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.