

Oconee County Connections

Employee Newsletter



Volume 8, No. 1

January 2026

Holiday Decorating Committee

Thank you to the employee-led
decorating committee

Employee Holiday Luncheon

Photos from the event

Human Resources Scoop

Payroll/Holiday Calendar 2026

Georgia Parks Award

Congrats Parks and Rec Team

Issue Index

3

Human Resources Scoop

4

Bring One for the Chipper 2025
Welcome to the Team

5

Employee Holiday Committee

6-7

Employee Holiday Luncheon and
Pin Ceremony Photos

8

Holiday Door Contest Winner
PlanFirst Community Designation

9

Georgia Parks Award
WaterFirst Community Award

10

Anniversaries

11

Birthdays

Human Resources Scoop

2026 Employee Calendar

Add these holiday dates to your 2026 Calendar!

New Year's Day

January 1

Martin Luther King Jr Day

January 19

Memorial Day

May 25

Independence Day

July 3 (observed)

Labor Day

September 7

Thanksgiving

November 27 & 28

Christmas Eve and Day

December 24 & 25

Oconee County Board of Commissioners

2026

Bi-Weekly Payroll & Holiday Calendar

JANUARY 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

FEBRUARY 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

MARCH 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

APRIL 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

MAY 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

JUNE 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

JULY 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

AUGUST 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

SEPTEMBER 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

OCTOBER 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

NOVEMBER 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

DECEMBER 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

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

Download the Holiday/Payroll 2026 Calendar to save here!

Bring One For the Chipper



Keep Oconee County Beautiful is sponsoring “Bring One for the Chipper 2025,” from December 26 through January 10 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, beginning January 2.

Trees are recycled by chipping them into mulch for use in landscaping, or by using them as fish or animal habitats. Since this program began, more than 6 million trees have been kept out of landfills.

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.

Parks and Rec
Jon Hobus

Employee Holiday Committee

The Holiday Committee has once again delivered holiday cheer to both our Administrative Building and the community! Their creativity was on full display in the annual Watkinsville Christmas Parade with a vintage fire truck decorated in the style of the parade's theme "Hometown Christmas," and they transformed our lobby into a warm and festive holiday showcase!

Thank you to all our Holiday Decoration Committee members:

Shawna Benson
Jessica Ellis
Amanda Mauldin
Carol McGrath
Amanda Shelton
Debbie Smith
Holly Stephenson
Jesika Stock
Erin Treadwell
C.J Worden



Special thanks to our parade driver, C.J. Worden!



Jennifer Stone's grandson, Zane, enjoyed the front lobby display. Jennifer says, "he loved seeing all the gifts under the tree!"

Employee Holiday Luncheon

It was great to see everyone who made it out to our annual Holiday Luncheon! Thank you to Jill and Beth in Human Resources and the entire Holiday Luncheon Committee, as well as the Civic Center staff, for all the hard work that went into this event!

Employee Holiday Luncheon Committee:

Beth Armstrong
Sarah Baird
Lisa Bowman
Denise Bradshaw
Gaby Bryan
Jill Faulkner
Amanda Mauldin
Carol McGrath
Pat Sebring
Amanda Shelton
Whitney Sperlik
Holly Stephenson
Susan Tidwell
C.J Worden

Christmas Trivia Winners!





5 Year Pin Recipients from left to right, Chad Wohlert, Tim Rice, Bobby Reno, Joann Hubert, Amery Harden, Jessica Ellis, David Dockins, Matt Beal, Beth Armstrong.



5 Year Pin Recipient, Carol McGrath.



20 Year Pin Recipient, Jenanne White.



Probate Court Judge Mike Hunsinger with 10 Year Pin Recipient, Kayla Bennett and 25 Year Pin Recipient, Ginny King



25 Year Pin Recipients from left to right, Gaby Bryan and Lance Raines.



Jeremy Wasdin standing with 10 Year Pin Recipient, Soniya Wallace- Burchett and 15 Year Pin Recipient, Mark Smith.



40 Year Pin Recipient, Linda Patterson standing with County Administrator, Justin Kirouac.



2025 Retiree, Danny Cottar.

Holiday Door Contest Winner

Congrats to GIS for winning the holiday door decorating contest with 51 votes!

All the submissions were amazing and creative. Thank you to everyone who participated in this annual contest.



PlanFirst Community

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) presented the Oconee County Planning and Code Enforcement Department with a renewed PlanFirst Community designation at the November 25, Board of Commissioners meeting. This is the third time Oconee County has been recognized by DCA for successful Comprehensive Plan implementation and an ongoing commitment to outstanding community planning and development with a focus on public involvement.



Georgia Parks Award



Congratulations to the Oconee County Parks and Recreation Department for being awarded the following:

- Georgia Recreation and Parks Association District 7 (GRPA D7) State Agency of the Year in the 30,001–80,000 population category
- GRPA D7 Programmer of the Year - Payton Massey
- GRPA D7 Student of the Year - Clay Dunagan
- GRPA D7 Volunteer of the Year - Wesley Scott
- GRPA D7 Jeff Pruitt Inspiration Award - Lisa Davol

The Parks and Recreation department demonstrated outstanding leadership in fostering community health, wellness, and connection through innovative recreation services, a dedicated team, and strategic stewardship of resources.

WaterFirst Community Award



Adam Layfield and Parker Middlebrooks attended the Waterfirst Community ceremony at the State Capitol.

The Oconee County Water Resources Department was recently honored at the Georgia State Capitol as a WaterFirst Community designee, a recognition program administered by the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA), highlights local governments that demonstrate strong leadership and long-term commitment to responsible water stewardship.

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!

Animal Services

Kevin Hearst 01/03/2024

Clerk of Courts

Jenna Pulliam 01/24/2022

Coroner

Ed Carson 01/01/2009

E-911

Yashica West 01/19/2016

Jail

Todd Gabriel 01/11/2008

Matt Towe 01/13/2020

Jason Toledo 01/21/2025

Joseph Harris 01/21/2025

Law Enforcement

Mark Smith 01/25/2010

Kenji Dorsey 01/01/2017

Mark Watson 01/21/2025

Robert McCannon 01/21/2025

Parks and Recreation

Kaitlyn Rainey 01/30/2023

Adam Bihi 01/06/2025

Jordan Smith 01/06/2025

Property Appraisal

Chris Neal 01/14/2013

Senior Center

Shirley Finch 01/28/2013

Emily Deal 01/09/2023

Superior Court

Jennifer Parker 01/03/2017

Mandi Ellis 01/01/2019

Kelli Bardner 01/01/2019

Tax Commissioner

Jennifer Riddle 01/01/2006

Tourism & Visitors Bureau

Joann Hubert 01/21/2020

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!

Dangelo McCord	01/01	Krista Dorsey	01/19
Stephen Wilson	01/02	Kris Robinson	01/21
Chris Neal	01/07	Jacob Hathaway	01/22
Greg Prater	01/08	Jordan Silvey	01/22
David Webb	01/08	Stephen Stuchell	01/22
Adam Layfield	01/09	Stephen Baker	01/23
Jackie Rowell	01/12	Julie Jackson	01/23
Jordan Carpenter	01/13	Noah Armstrong	01/24
William Lewis	01/13	Annie Stephenson	01/24
Robert Perrin	01/13	Jeremy Wasdin	01/24
Dwayne Collins	01/14	Migdai Marin	01/27
Melissa Braswell	01/16	Chrystal Custis	01/28
Julius Floyd	01/16	Eric Norris	01/28
Ginger Thrasher	01/16	Jennifer Jones	01/29
Bruce Thaxton	01/17	Jessica Ellis	01/30

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.