

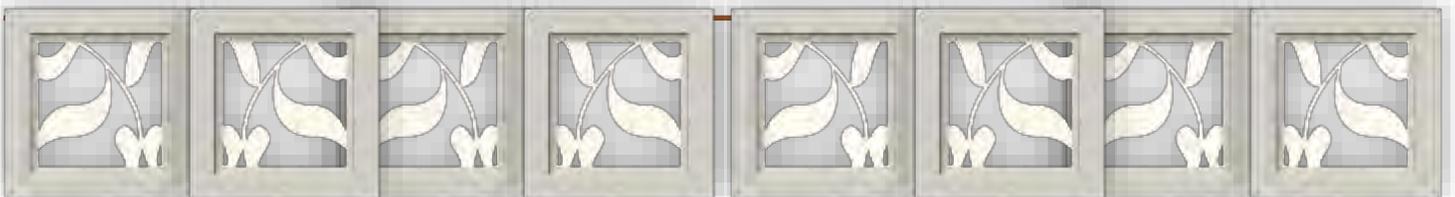
IN THE NEWS

March 2018

Parks & Recreation Programs
Frances Meadows Aquatic and Community Center
Gainesville Civic Center
Lake Lanier Olympic Center
City / County Issues
Miscellaneous



Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency
830 Green Street
Gainesville, GA 30501



David Allen Fox Sr.

Dec. 31, 1947-Feb. 26, 2018

David Allen Fox Sr., 70, of Gainesville passed away Monday, Feb. 26, 2018.

A public celebration of life service is scheduled for 2 p.m. Friday, March 2, at First United Methodist Church in Gainesville with the family receiving friends at the church following the service.

David was born on New Year's Eve 1948 in Atlanta, Ga., to Saul E. Fox and Sarah S. O'Neal. He grew up in Atlanta and Munich, Germany.

David earned degrees from the University of Georgia, the University of Georgia School of Law and the National College of Juvenile and Family Law.

He was admitted to the bar in 1973 and was admitted to practice in Georgia, the Supreme Court of Georgia and Florida and the 5th and 11th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. David served as Special Assistant Attorney General for the State of Georgia (1980-1986), State Court Solicitor Pro Term (1978), Hall County Juvenile Court Judge (1986-1990) and a Georgia Certified Mediator for the Supreme Court of Georgia (1994). He was a member of the Gainesville-Northeastern Bar Association, serving as its secretary from 1976 to 1977, and the Georgia Trial Lawyers Association. David was a longtime partner at Fox, Chandler, Homans, Hicks & McKinnon. When David first started practicing law in Gainesville, he became close with a group of local young lawyers, and a brotherhood was created that still exists today. He was both a successful litigator and a well-respected mediator, who fought valiantly to bring his clients both justice and resolution. David discovered a true gift in mediating cases to help people resolve the most difficult and contentious issues. Many judges throughout North Georgia and the Atlanta Metro area paid David the high complement of specifically referring their most difficult cases to him to mediate.

His robust legal career could only be overshadowed by his devotion to his country and his community. David retired as a U.S. Army Captain, serving from 1970-1977. He also served as president of the Gainesville Rotary Club, Hall County American Cancer Society and the Hall-Dawson Georgia Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). He served on the Board of Advisors for Brenau University, was Treasurer of the Christian Education Center and was the director of the Lanier Area Council of Child Abuse. He was passionately active in his church, Gainesville First United Methodist Church, where he was a board member, Sunday School teacher, Disciple bible study leader and member of the Cross Ties Sunday School class. He was an Assistant Scout Master at Troop 16 where both his sons (Allen and Jackson) achieved the highest rank of Eagle Scout. A member of Leadership Hall County, David was awarded Kiwanis Club Youth Service Award. Finally, David was a coach for numerous sports at Gainesville Parks and Recreation and could often be found on the tennis court or at any Gainesville High School athletic and performing arts event.



David was probably one of the busiest people most people had ever met. Although he continued to be a busy lawyer, helping people every day, he found time for so many other things that interested him. He developed a passion for refereeing basketball games throughout North Georgia. He even went back to school and taught at Lanier Technical College. Helping other people and connecting with other people were what made David thrive. He had a servant's heart and inspired everyone who knew him with his outpouring of love and generosity of spirit. His zest for life was contagious, and it was absolutely impossible to stifle a smile while in his presence.

Although David freely shared his joy and enthusiasm with everyone he met, those closest to him knew it was his wife and three children who served as the source of that great happiness. He was most proud of Mimi (his loving wife of 39 years) and being the "Greatest Dad" to Allen, Stacy and Jackson. He was their hero, and they, along with a host of other relatives (especially from the Jackson family) and friends, are grateful for the legacy of love, joy and selflessness David leaves behind.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Gainesville First United Methodist Church, 2780 Thompson Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30506; Boy Scouts of America Gainesville Troup 16, 2780 Thompson Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30506; Gainesville High School Theater Department, 830 Century Place, Gainesville, GA 30501; or to Eagle Ranch, 5500 Union Church Road, Flowery Branch, GA 30542.

Memorial Park North Riverside Chapel, 989 Riverside Drive, Gainesville, GA 30501, 770-297-6200, or for those who desire online condolences at www.memorialparkfuneralhomes.com.

Memorial Park North Riverside Chapel, Gainesville

Sign the online guest book at gainesville-times.com.

The Times, Gainesville, Ga.

March 1, 2018

3-1-18

3-1-18

NEWSMAKERS IN BUSINESS

Turner, Wood & Smith breaks ground on new headquarters

Turner, Wood & Smith Insurance broke ground on its new headquarters in the New Holland area off Jesse Jewell Parkway on Tuesday, Feb. 27.

The 16,000-square-foot headquarters will be at 1514 Community Way between Frances Meadows Aquatic Center and Gainesville Middle School.

TWS was founded in 1905 and operates throughout Northeast Georgia. The company sold its current location at 100 Brenau Ave., where it has been since 1989, to the city of Gainesville for a possible future parking deck. The insurance company is leasing that Brenau Avenue building from the city until it moves to the Community Way building.



For The Times

Officials and employees of Turner, Wood & Smith held a groundbreaking for its new headquarters in the New Holland area off Jesse Jewell Parkway on Tuesday, Feb. 27.

3-4-18

Upcoming Chamber Events

Thursday, March 8
Transportation Forum
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
University of North Georgia
Gainesville Campus | Cont Ed Bldg

Tuesday, March 13
Small Business Seminar
7:45 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. | Chamber

Wednesday, March 14
Lunch 'n Learn
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Avocados | Gainesville

Friday, March 16
New Member Orientation
8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
Quinlan Visual Arts Center

Wednesday, March 21
Job Fair
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Gainesville Civic Center

Thursday, March 22
Chamber Chase 5K
6:00 p.m.
Riverside Military Academy

Tuesday, March 27
Agribusiness Awards Breakfast
7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
North Hall Community Center

Thursday, March 29
Business After Hours
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Sunrise Cove Marina in Gainesville

Details & Register Online
for these events and more
GreaterHallChamber.com

3-6-18

Job Fair 2018

Wednesday, March 21

10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Gainesville Civic Center

Open to the Public • No Admission Fee

Job Seekers! Complete employment applications on site while networking with companies that are hiring. **Limited Employer Booths available.** Amanda Lewis, 770-532-6206. Email: alewis@ghcc.com. GreaterHallChamber.com/events

Job Fair 2018 Presented By



Goods & Services Sponsors

McGarity's Business Products • Milton Martin Honda
Panera Bread • Signs By Tomorrow

3-6-18

Job Fair

Wednesday, March 21

10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Gainesville Civic Center

*Great opportunity for both
employers and job seekers!*

The Chamber's Job Fair on Wednesday, March 21, 10 am-2pm, is **Open to the Public! NO Entry Fee!** Employers will meet hundreds of job candidates face-to-face during a short period of time. Job Seekers will spend coveted face-time with dozens of hiring managers. Presented by **Express Employment Professionals**, this community event features 60+ employer exhibitors. Complete job applications on site while making great business contacts and networking with companies that are hiring. **Limited Employer Booths still available.** Promote your company while recruiting qualified employees. Meet hundreds of job seekers in one day. Exhibit information: Amanda Lewis, Project Manager, Economic Development, 770-532-6206 x 111. Email: alewis@ghcc.com. Exhibit Registration Online: GreaterHallChamber.com/events

No Entry Fee to the Job Fair!

- Open to the Public - 3-6-18

MARCH 2018

Tuesday, March 6
Ambassador Council
3:45 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.
2 Dog Cafe | Gainesville

Wednesday, March 7
Healthcare Committee
8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. | Chamber

Thursday, March 8
Leadership Hall County
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 8
Transportation Forum
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
University of North Georgia
Gainesville Campus | Cont Ed Bldg

Friday, March 9
Economic Development Council
7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
Chamber

Tuesday, March 13
Small Business Seminar
7:45 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. | Chamber

Tuesday, March 13
Youth Leadership Hall
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 14
Network Over Coffee
8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
Panera Bread | Gainesville

Wednesday, March 14
Human Resource Council
11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Luna's | Gainesville

Wednesday, March 14
Lunch 'n Learn
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Avocados Restaurant
109 Bradford Street | Gainesville

Thursday, March 15
Chamber Executive Committee
12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. | Chamber

Friday, March 16
New Member Orientation
8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
Quinlan Visual Arts Center

Tuesday, March 20
Vision 2030 Board of Directors
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. | Chamber

Wednesday, March 21
Issues Committee
8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. | Chamber

✧ Wednesday, March 21
Job Fair
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Gainesville Civic Center

✧ Thursday, March 22
Chamber Board of Directors
12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Gainesville Civic Center

Thursday, March 22
Chamber Chase 5K
6:00 p.m. 5K Run
6:10 p.m. 2 Mile Wellness Walk
7:00 p.m. Awards
Riverside Military Academy

Tuesday, March 27
Agribusiness Awards Breakfast
7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.
North Hall Community Center

Wednesday, March 28
Network Over Coffee
8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
Hampton Inn & Suites at Château Elan
5159 Golf Club Drive | Braselton

Thursday, March 29
Business After Hours
Sponsored by **Sunrise Cove Marina**
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
5725 Flat Creek Road | Gainesville

APRIL 2018

Wednesday, April 18
Lunch 'n Learn
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Cyre-Leike Realty
956B Dawsonville Hwy | Gainesville

Friday, April 27
Hackers Holiday Golf Tournament
10:00 a.m. Shotgun Start
Legacy on Lanier at Lanier Islands

Online: GreaterHallChamber.com

TIGERS ORANGE 11-AND-UNDER TEAM WINS TOURNAMENT



For The Times

The Tigers Orange 11-and-under baseball team won the Southern Sports Slugfest warmup on Saturday at Lanier Point Park. Team members are Charlie Dyer, Carson Brown, Elijah Forrester, McKinley Kemp, Tyler Boggs, Shelton Ramey, Tavarius Dowdy, Eli Chaffin, Dawson Oliver, David Miller and Grant Gooch.

3-7-18

Meetings to focus on housing crunch

Higher rents, fewer choices are shutting out residents

BY JOSHUA SILAVENT
jsilavent@gainesvilletimes.com

A lack of affordable housing and perceived discrimination in the rental market has prompted the Newtown Florist Club, a local civil rights organization, to schedule three community meetings to address these problems and educate residents about their housing rights.

In recent months, hundreds of lower-income families in Gainesville have faced significant rent

increases as apartment complexes, such as Lenox Park (now rebranded as The Peaks at Gainesville under new ownership), exit a state tax credit program that kept costs below market rates.

Properties leaving the tax credit program will no longer accept Section 8 housing subsidies and vouchers that also kept rents affordable for working families.

The Times has extensively documented the shortage of affordable housing in Hall County in the past two years.

More than 50 percent of all renters in Gainesville, for example, are considered "cost-burdened," according to census figures, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing.

And more than 60 percent of all households in the city limits are renter-occupied.

In November, Beth Brown, executive director of the Gainesville Housing Authority, said the waiting list for public housing had spiked to 1,600 from 250 in just a few months, partly as a result of rising rents at

Community meetings

What: Series of conversations about housing discrimination in Gainesville and Hall County, put on by the Newtown Florist Club
6 p.m. March 22: Section 8 housing discrimination training on how to file a complaint

6 p.m. April 26: Housing discrimination against families with children

6 p.m. May 24: Why some landlords deny Section 8 housing vouchers

Where: Fair Street Neighborhood Center, 715 Fair St., Gainesville

More Info: 770-718-1343 or newtown193@gmail.com

formerly low-income complexes.

The Housing Authority has partnered with a private developer to build Walton Summit on the site of the former Green Hunter Homes public housing complex off Atlanta

Street in Gainesville.

"The addition of these units will help," Brown said last fall, "but come nowhere near meeting our community's need for affordable

■ Please see HOUSING, 3C

3-11-18

HOUSING

■ Continued from 1C

housing. The affordable housing shortage does not just affect welfare recipients and minimum wage earners."

The Newtown club is partnering with the Georgia Legal Services Program and Morningstar Urban Development Homeownership Center, a DeKalb County-based nonprofit, as hosts of the training and workshops.

Chad McCranie, a staff attorney with GLSP, said his firm will

be available to answer legal questions about fair housing laws and discrimination.

"We can also address the requirements of participating in the Section 8 program and how that might determine which landlords decide to participate in the program," he said.

But the training is being conducted by grass-roots leaders "who are recipients of the program and those who are deeply passionate about wanting to see change," Newtown Florist Club executive director Rose Johnson said.

"NFC is training a new cadre of leaders to

know the issues from their own experiences, how their lives are being impacted by public policy decisions and what actions can be taken if they face discriminatory action. We want everyone who has a Section 8 voucher who has been denied to understand the program and different ways that discrimination can be present and what recourse is available to them if they have had a problem."

The Newtown neighborhood has played a key role in making affordable housing available to area residents over the last 15 years through its "Land

Trust" program, building five new homes.

"Our focus now is on the people who live in our community who may not make a living wage and cannot find a place to live without the Section 8 housing choice voucher," Johnson said. "If one of the problems causing this crisis is that some landlords are denying the vouchers, we really want to know the reasons why ... because the denial of Section 8 vouchers in such a widespread way feels like discrimination. Our position is that everyone regardless of income level deserves a decent place to live."

3-11-18

Cagle vows to create jobs, keep taxes low during rally

BY JEFF GILL
jgill@gainesvilletimes.com

Repeating a campaign vow to create 500,000 jobs in his first term if elected governor, Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle told a mostly hometown crowd in Gainesville that he hopes to take Georgia to "a new level."

"I'm going to make sure ... we are a low-tax state, a low-regulatory environment ... and a workforce that is second to none," he said during a rally Sunday, March 11, at the Gainesville Civic Center.

"When we do that, I can promise you the state of Georgia will be a beacon to the entire nation, if not the world. We are already the capital of the South, but we are always better when our reach is a little bit further than we can imagine."

Several hundred showed up for the event, with the ballroom decorated in Cagle signs and other campaign materials.

The Republican and Hall County native is part of a crowded field to replace Gov. Nathan Deal, who's completing his second and final four-year term.

The other candidates are Clay Tippins, Eddie Hayes, Hunter Hill, Brian Kemp, Marc Urbach and Michael Williams. They will face each other in a May 22 primary.



Cagle

Cagle's appearance at the civic center marked the third stop in his statewide "Country Tour." He has visited Evans and Rome, and is set to hold rallies in Perry, Midway and Midville.

"I tell people often that I'm not running against anyone for governor," he told the crowd. "I'm not running for a job and I'm not running for a position, because I don't need one. I'm running to make a difference."

"It's about the vision of this state and moving it to a place of greater economic prosperity where no one is left behind."

He said Georgia is expected to grow by 4.5 million people in the next 15 years.

"Some of us might kind of cringe (at that), but I'm excited about it," Cagle said. "It gives me an opportunity as governor to not just plan, but to shape, what that growth is going to look like."

He said to meet that population, infrastructure improvements need to be made.

In introducing Cagle, state Sen. Butch Miller, R-Gainesville, spoke to the crowd about the race ahead.

"It's a marathon, folks, so get laced up," he told supporters. "We want you to be there every step of the way."

Miller said "it's a great honor to serve with Casey."

"He has served with distinction," he said.

In introducing Cagle's wife, Nita Cagle, state Sen. Renee Unterman, R-Buford, said, "We want to see this family in the Georgia (governor's) mansion."

"We often hear that the best place to see someone's ability to lead is at home," Nita Cagle said. "I can tell you ... he is the best choice we have, as Georgians, to lead our state."

3-12-18

3-12-18

Dems drawing more candidates

Party fields 7 hopefuls, more than total of last 4 elections

BY NICK BOWMAN

nbowman@gainesvilletimes.com

"I'm one of the few Democrats in this room that has a concealed carry license."

Thus spoke Alana Watkins, a local resident and candidate for state office, at the Hall County Democratic Party meeting Monday, March 12, where more than two dozen people gathered for the party's monthly huddle — a huddle that included some unorthodox views from the left as the party tries to regain its foothold in ruby

red North Georgia.

Watkins is running for a Georgia House seat in District 29, a seat held by Rep. Matt Dubnik, R-Gainesville. She's one of seven Democratic candidates who qualified to run for local office this year in Hall County across races for federal, state and county offices.

Seven candidates is more than the party has fielded in 2016, 2014, 2012 and 2010 — combined. In 2014, the county party qualified zero people, according to chairman Kim Copeland. The most it put up in those four cycles was

three people in 2010.

But this year, Hall County Democrats have a presence in races for Hall County school board, Hall County Board of Commissioners, House District 29, House District 30 and the Georgia 9th District seat in Congress.

Democrats have a primary race in two of those seats: House District 29 and the Georgia 9th seat, though the latter is between Gainesville resident Josh McCall and Clayton's Dave Cooper for the chance to face

■ Please see **CANDIDATES, 8A**



NICK BOWMAN | The Times

Most of the Hall County Democratic Party's 2018 ticket smile for pictures during the party meeting Monday at the Gainesville Civic Center. Pictured from left in back are Patrick Anderson, Cynthia Lyne Shubert-Jett, Alana Watkins, Josh McCall, Maria Palacios and Stephanie Lopez-Burgos. The party qualified seven candidates for public office this year — more than the past four election cycles combined.

3-14-18

CANDIDATES

■ Continued from 1A

U.S. Rep. Doug Collins, R-Gainesville, in the fall general election.

Other candidates include Michael Parker, running for the District 1 seat on the county commission, Stephanie Lopez-Burgos, running for the at-large seat of the Board of Education, and William Wallace, running for the board's District 2 seat.

The number of Democrats signing up to run for office and showing up to meetings and donating to campaigns reflect a party energized by the opportunity they see in poor polling on the part of President Donald Trump and the Republican Party in Congress.

And seeing an opening, the Hall County Democrats are trying something new this year: Pitching to Republicans.

It's not just Watkins on the issue of gun ownership. Michelle Sanchez Jones, the head of the Young Democrats of Hall County, said the group is planning a meet-and-greet with the Democratic candidates this month that will make a case to moderate Republicans.

"We don't want this to be just for Democrats," she said. "We're going to be picking parts of everybody's platform and finding a way to reframe it so it can sound like a conservative issue as well."

Whether it's a small-government policy or an anti-regulation position, the event is intended to give moderate Republicans not only a reason to show up to the event but, if they're lucky, shift some votes.

3-14-18

"We want them to come out; we want them to meet these candidates," Sanchez Jones said.

The party is also fielding candidates with an economic message. Patrick Anderson, a certified public accountant running against Watkins in the District 29 primary, has worked for Cargill, KIK Custom Products and American Home Products, a supplier for The Home Depot.

"I've hired a lot of people. I've seen resumes and gotten to know everyone that I work with," Anderson said Monday. "One of the things I want to try and work on is higher paying jobs. Lots of people are driving long distances for higher-paying jobs in Atlanta, or kids are living in their parents' basements — I've got one."

His last line pulled some laughs out of the audience: Anderson wasn't the only one in the room with a child still living at home.

The room in general was full of laughter on Monday. Hall County Democrats have apparently gotten over their post-Trump election depression and are looking to the future even if the party's chances of reclaiming any of the seats they lost in the 1990s remain slim.

"I'm really excited that we're having such a great turnout for Democrats. Alana and I, it's amazing we're having a primary," Anderson said.

"This is better than football, Patrick," Watkins shot back. "We need something to excite everyone."

The party still has its solidly progressive candidates, including McCall and Maria Palacios, who is now running for Gainesville's House District 30 seat, held by Rep. Emory Dunahoo, R-Gillsville. Palacios put in a bid for a Gainesville City Council seat last year and works as a lobbyist for the Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials.

And just like the moderates, they're more energized this year in Hall than they have been in years.

"Now is the time. If ever we thought there was a chance, there's a wave this year," Palacios said. "It's a 2018 tidal wave and all of us is in it — and we're rising. I need each one of you to help, and I know that we can win."

3-14-18

Job Fair

Wednesday, March 21

10 am - 2 pm



Gainesville Civic Center

Visit 70+ Companies that are Hiring!

- | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| Ace Hardware RSC | Gainesville Parks & Recreation | Lumite |
| Advanced Disposal Services | Georgia Department of Labor | McDonald's |
| Advantage Resourcing | Georgia Department of Driver Services | Modern Woodmen of America |
| ALBAform, Inc. | Goodwill / Oakwood Career Center | Northeast Georgia Health System |
| Arrendale State Prison | Habasit America | Panera Bread |
| Atex | Hall County | Performance Food Service Milton's |
| Avita Community Partners | Hall County Sheriff's Office | Pilgrim's |
| Axiom Staffing Group | Heavy Equipment College of Georgia | PrideStaff |
| Blue Sky Refurbishing | HomeGoods Distribution Center | R.N.C. Industries |
| BOS Staffing | Hydro Extrusions North America | Randstad |
| Caremaster Medical | IMS Gear | Resource MFG |
| Carroll Daniel Construction Company | Interactive College of Technology | Ring Container Technologies |
| Charter/Spectrum | Jackson EMC | Salford BBI |
| Chattahoochee Country Club | Keller Williams Realty Lanier Partners | Spherion Staffing Services |
| Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen | Kelly Services | Texas Roadhouse |
| Classic Window Coverings | KIK Custom Products | The Sherwin-Williams Company |
| Conditioned Air Systems | King's Hawaiian | The Times |
| District 2 Public Health | Koch Foods | Top Notch Personnel |
| Domo Engineering Plastics, US | Kubota | Tribe Transportation |
| Etcon Employment Solutions | Lanier Technical College | Waffle House |
| Express Employment Professionals | Lanier Village Estates / Culinary | Woodruff Medical Training & Testing |
| Fieldale Farms | Lanier Village Estates / Home Health | WorkSource Georgia Mountains |
| Gainesville Area Employer Committee | Legacy Link | Zebra Technologies |

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Complete Job Applications



Job Openings
Hiring Managers Onsite



3-15-18

BY LAYNE SALIBA
lsaliba@gainesvilletimes.com

As Easter approaches, the community is gearing up with numerous egg hunts.

Gainesville Parks and Recreation

When: 2 p.m. March 25

Where: Midtown Greenway, 830 Green St., Gainesville

Gainesville Parks and Recreation will have its annual Easter egg hunt for its expected 1,500 guests at the Midtown Greenway at the corner of Banks and Grove streets. Hunts start at 2 p.m. for the younger kids and 2:45 p.m. for the older ones.

"We place a lot of focus and priority on community events," said Julie Butler, marketing and communication director for Gainesville Parks and Recreation. "We especially like to have large events in our parks system because it gets people out to the parks, and it gives families an opportunity to bond together."

It will have a magician, face painting and a bounce house for the kids to enjoy. The Easter bunny will also be there for photos for \$5.

3-15-18

770-532-6206 · GreaterHallChamber.com

Job Fair

Wednesday, March 21

10 am - 2 pm



Gainesville Civic Center

Visit 70+ Companies that are Hiring!

- | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| Ace Hardware RSC | Gainesville Parks & Recreation | Lumite |
| Advanced Disposal Services | Georgia Department of Labor | McDonald's |
| Advantage Resourcing | Georgia Department of Driver Services | Modern Woodmen of America |
| ALBAform, Inc. | Goodwill / Oakwood Career Center | Northeast Georgia Health System |
| Arrendale State Prison | Habasit America | Panera Bread |
| Atex | Hall County | Performance Food Service Milton's |
| Avita Community Partners | Hall County Sheriff's Office | Pilgrim's |
| Axiom Staffing Group | Heavy Equipment College of Georgia | PrideStaff |
| Blue Sky Refurbishing | HomeGoods Distribution Center | R.N.C. Industries |
| BOS Staffing | Hydro Extrusions North America | Randstad |
| Caremaster Medical | IMS Gear | Resource MFG |
| Carroll Daniel Construction Company | Interactive College of Technology | Ring Container Technologies |
| Charter/Spectrum | Jackson EMC | Salford BBI |
| Chattahoochee Country Club | Keller Williams Realty Lanier Partners | Spherion Staffing Services |
| Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen | Kelly Services | Texas Roadhouse |
| Classic Window Coverings | KJK Custom Products | The Sherwin-Williams Company |
| Conditioned Air Systems | King's Hawaiian | The Times |
| District 2 Public Health | Koch Foods | Top Notch Personnel |
| Domo Engineering Plastics, US | Kubota | Tribe Transportation |
| Etcon Employment Solutions | Lanier Technical College | Waffle House |
| Express Employment Professionals | Lanier Village Estates / Culinary | Woodruff Medical Training & Testing |
| Fieldale Farms | Lanier Village Estates / Home Health | WorkSource Georgia Mountains |
| Gainesville Area Employer Committee | Legacy Link | Zebra Technologies |

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Job Openings
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3-18-18

Job Fair

Wednesday, March 21

10 am - 2 pm



Gainesville Civic Center

Visit 70+ Companies that are Hiring!

- | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| Ace Hardware RSC | Gainesville Parks & Recreation | Lumite |
| Advanced Disposal Services | Georgia Department of Labor | McDonald's |
| Advantage Resourcing | Georgia Department of Driver Services | Modern Woodmen of America |
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| Conditioned Air Systems | King's Hawaiian | The Times |
| District 2 Public Health | Koch Foods | Top Notch Personnel |
| Domo Engineering Plastics, US | Kubota | Tribe Transportation |
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| Gainesville Area Employer Committee | Legacy Link | Zebra Technologies |

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Job Openings
Hiring Managers Onsite



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3-19-18

Job fair set amid rosy jobless numbers

BY JEFF GILL
jgill@gainesvilletimes.com

Recent glowing reports about Hall County's jobs picture aside, 70-plus companies are scheduled to be at an annual job fair Wednesday, March 21, at the Gainesville Civic Center.

"There's a lot of ... filling needs for businesses right now," said Tim Evans, vice president of economic development for the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce.

"If we had more space (at the civic center), we'd probably have more companies there."

Express Employment Professionals is presenting the event, along with the chamber, Lanier Technical College, Georgia Department of Labor and the Gainesville Area Employer Committee.

Metro Gainesville, which includes all of Hall County, has had a rosy jobless picture over the past year, according to DOL numbers.

A January report showed that the area



Evans

Annual job fair

What: 70-plus companies interviewing and hiring for jobs

When: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, March 21

Where: Gainesville Civic Center, 830 Green St.

Cost: Free to attend

JOBS

■ Continued from 1A

closed out 2017 with record highs for jobs, employed residents and workforce size.

"All of the major indicators trended in the right direction. In fact, records were set. I'm expecting the same will continue in 2018," Labor Commissioner Mark Butler said at the time.

By the end of 2017, Hall's unemployment rate had fallen to 3.5 percent from 4.2 percent at beginning of the year. Metro Gainesville ranked fifth in Georgia for job creation among 14 metro statistical areas tracked by the DOL.

Latest labor numbers showed the January jobless number ticked up slightly to 3.6 percent.

The chamber's fair, which is free to attend, will feature employers ready to hire.

"They often do pre-screen interviews or full interviews right there on the spot," Evans said. "We do encourage people to come dressed appropriately — you're making a first impression. If you've got a resume, bring a resume."

"Be prepared to fill out some job applications and meet some people, and be talking to people who are making hiring decisions."

Hires for a wide range of jobs are being sought by employers.

The event typically draws a large crowd — some 1,000 job seekers are expected — so a shuttle will be provided to get people from the parking lots to the civic center.



Butler

3-19-18

■ Please see **JOBS, 6A**
3-19-18

Job Fair

Wednesday, March 21

10 am - 2 pm



Gainesville Civic Center

Visit 70+ Companies that are Hiring!

- | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| Ace Hardware RSC | Gainesville Parks & Recreation | Lumite |
| Advanced Disposal Services | Georgia Department of Labor | McDonald's |
| Advantage Resourcing | Georgia Department of Driver Services | Modern Woodmen of America |
| ALBAform, Inc. | Goodwill / Oakwood Career Center | Northeast Georgia Health System |
| Arrendale State Prison | Habasit America | Panera Bread |
| Atex | Hall County | Performance Food Service Milton's |
| Avita Community Partners | Hall County Sheriff's Office | Pilgrim's |
| Axiom Staffing Group | Heavy Equipment College of Georgia | PrideStaff |
| Blue Sky Refurbishing | HomeGoods Distribution Center | R.N.C. Industries |
| BOS Staffing | Hydro Extrusions North America | Randstad |
| Caremaster Medical | IMS Gear | Resource MFG |
| Carroll Daniel Construction Company | Interactive College of Technology | Ring Container Technologies |
| Charter/Spectrum | Jackson EMC | Salford BBI |
| Chattahoochee Country Club | Keller Williams Realty Lanier Partners | Spherion Staffing Services |
| Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen | Kelly Services | Texas Roadhouse |
| Classic Window Coverings | KIK Custom Products | The Sherwin-Williams Company |
| Conditioned Air Systems | King's Hawaiian | The Times |
| District 2 Public Health | Koch Foods | Top Notch Personnel |
| Domo Engineering Plastics, US | Kubota | Tribe Transportation |
| Etcon Employment Solutions | Lanier Technical College | Waffle House |
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3-20-18

Collins should welcome input from constituents in his district

On Monday, March 12, I attended a Hall County Democratic Party meeting at the Gainesville Civic Center. I was happy to see we had a representative of The Times present. I was also happy to see The Times ran a story on our meeting a couple of days later.

At this meeting, a friend of mine and one of the more productive members of the party, Michelle Sanchez, announced a meet-and-greet with some of our local candidates. She made a point of being inclusive and pointing out that the forum would not be a strictly partisan affair. After all, there are many issues on which we can all agree, and it is always beneficial to meet as many candidates as possible.

At least, I would think so. Obviously our 9th District Rep. Doug Collins looks at the issue differently. Instead of praising his constituent for trying to play an active role in her republic, and encouraging potential voters to educate themselves about the issues and the candidates, Collins took to Facebook to demonize the local opposition.

"The Democrats actually admitting to trying to fool voters! Wow", our congressman wrote on his page.

I should not have to point out to the honorable Rep. Collins that the Democratic Party is not part of any menacing Axis of Evil. Ms. Sanchez was not, despite what our representative would have voters believe, rubbing her hands together and laughing maniacally while proposing some nefarious political plot.

We were discussing an opportunity for the public to come together and discuss important issues with potential officeholders. It seems the sort of activity that a congressman would praise. It seems Rep. Collins would be proud to have residents of his district whom are engaged in the political debate.

Perhaps, though, we are seeing what our republic has become. Perhaps this is a small example of how our representatives would rather have their constituents stay uninformed and believe anyone with a different opinion is "trying to fool" them. Unfortunate.

Perhaps, though, our honorable congressman misspoke after a long day of serving the public. Perhaps he would like to publicly apologize to Ms. Sanchez, and the local Democratic Party, and join us in an attempt to bring our community together. I, for one, hope so.

Jeff Casper
Gainesville

3-21-18

Gainesville Civic Center hosts over 70 employers at job fair



Photos by **SCOTT ROGERS** | The Times

Northeast Georgia Health System health care Recruiter Angela Nicholson meets with Ricky Dukes at her booth Wednesday, March 21, at the Gainesville Civic Center during the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce annual job fair.

3-22-18

750 people seeking employment attend event

BY JEFF GILL

jgill@gainesvilletimes.com

To supplement income from his tree-cutting business, Ricky Dukes of Oakwood was walking the hardwood floor at the Gainesville Civic Center checking out potential employers.

Besides, "my wife wants me to get out of the house," he said, smiling. "She said I need to do something that will keep me going."

Dukes was among 750 job seekers visiting a job fair Wednesday, March 21, that featured 70-plus companies and organizations with tables spread out across the center's ballroom, as well as side rooms and a main hallway.

"If we had more space (at the civic center), we'd probably have more companies," Tim Evans, vice president of economic development for the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce, has said.

Express Employment Professionals presented the event, along with the chamber, Lanier Technical College, Georgia Department of Labor and the Gainesville Area Employer Committee.



Spherion client service supervisor Ashleigh Kovach meets with potential hires.

"Seven or eight years ago, the big issue was not enough jobs and today, we have a lot of jobs," said state Labor Commissioner Mark Butler, visiting the fair. "I've talked to a half-dozen companies so far, and I've counted up 350 job openings. And a lot of (the jobs) pay really well."

A wide range of companies were represented at the

fair, from manufacturers to restaurant chains.

Rita Lynch, who works in human resources for Waffle House, touted her company's paid vacations, full- and part-time schedules and other benefits.

"We pay (employees) in cash — they don't have to go somewhere to cash their check," she said. "That usu-

ally attracts people."

Plus, "with our management team, we are very competitive" in terms of pay, Lynch said.

"That's what a lot of people don't realize," she added.

Ashleigh Kovach, client service supervisor with Spherion, said helping

■ Please see FAIR, 8A

3-22-18

FAIR

■ Continued from 1A

companies find qualified employees is challenging, particularly as the Gainesville metro area — or all of Hall County — has one of the lowest jobless rates in the state.

"We're trying to find people who have jobs and place them in other, better jobs," she said.

Spherion is a Gainesville firm that helps people find temporary and permanent jobs.

About 900 people attended last year's job fair, according to the chamber.

Many employers came ready to hire or interview, with application tables set up throughout the center. Evans had recommended that attendees bring resumes and dress to impress.

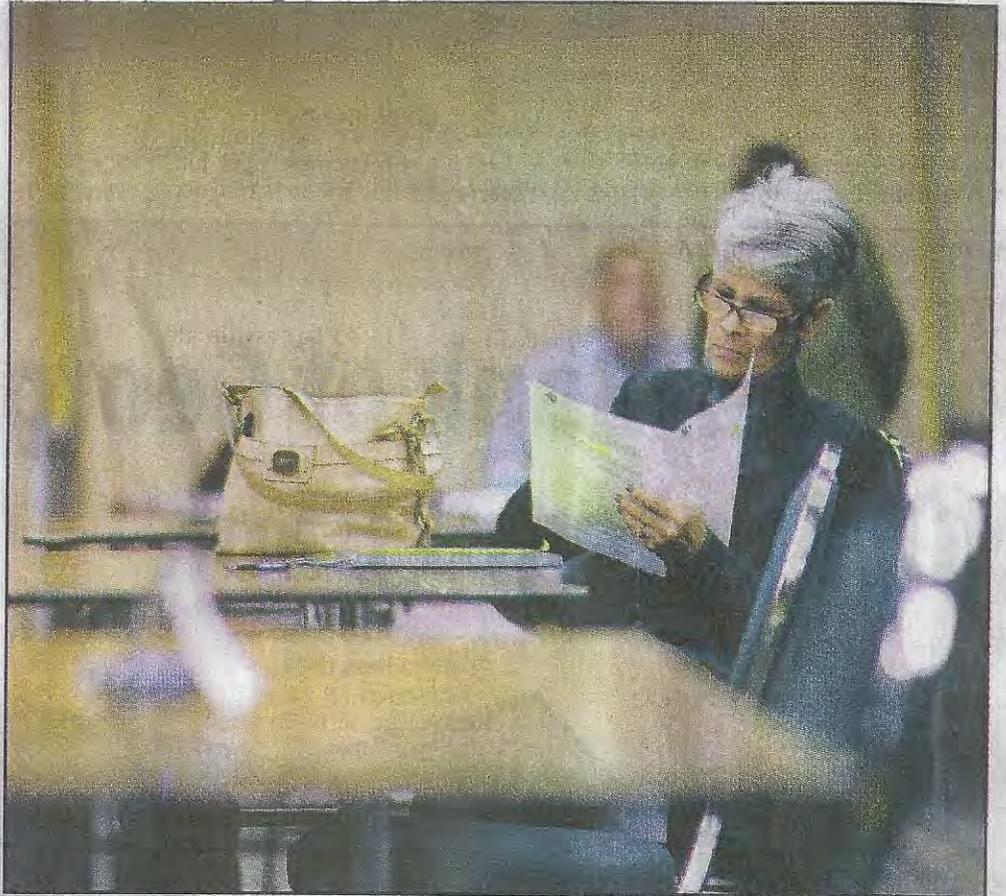
Maria Leggett of Gainesville was a job seeker seated at one of the tables.

"I need to find a more steady position than what I have," she said. "I have a part-time position right now."

Overall, Hall's employment picture is one of the brightest in Georgia.

A January Department of Labor report showed that the area closed out 2017 with record highs for jobs, employed residents and workforce size.

"All of the major indicators trended in the right direction. In fact, records were set. I'm expecting the same will continue in 2018," Butler said at the time.



Above: Maria Leggett reads papers at the applicant table.

Right: Northeast Georgia Health System health care recruiter Angela Nicholson meets with a steady stream of job seekers at her booth. **Below:** McDonald's General Manager Felipe Deleon meets with applicant Yasmeen Hopkins.





Photos by **SCOTT ROGERS** | The Times

Brett Fullmer fills out paperwork Wednesday, March 21, at the Gainesville Civic Center during the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce annual job fair.

3-22-18

Revival, and skatepark, brewing in midtown

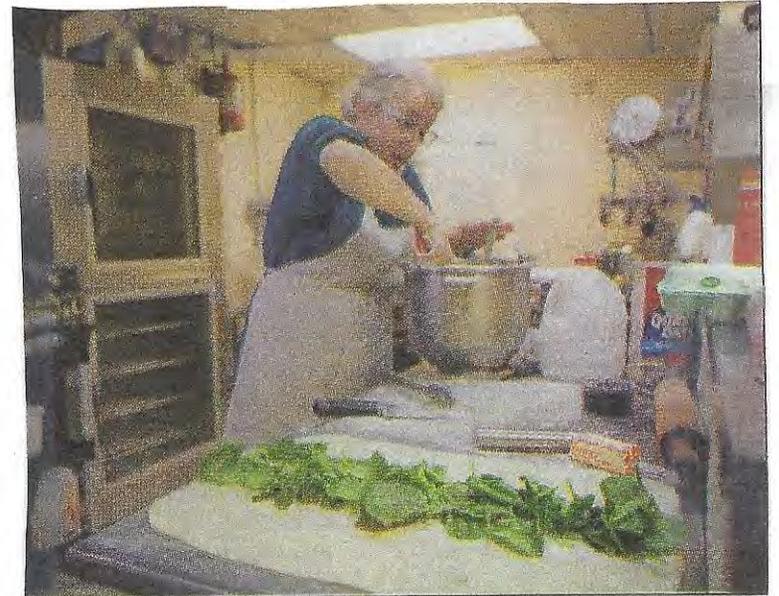
3-25-18



Photos by **NICK BOWMAN** | The Times

The mural on Gainesville Paint looms over the cleared lot where the old Hall County jail stood until last year, when the city of Gainesville paid almost \$377,000 to demolish the property to make way for future commercial development. As downtown Gainesville gets a \$52 million makeover this year, eyes in the city are turning to the more industrial side of the area in midtown.

3-25-18



Kathy Wedegis prepares a stuffed bread in the back of The Colored Egg, her bakery on Grove Street in midtown Gainesville.

3-25-18

BY NICK BOWMAN

nbowman@gainesvilletimes.com

When Kathy Wedegis wanted to open a bakery in Gainesville in 2010, she and her then-partner found an old warehouse office on Grove Street in midtown.

Painted brick, cubical and rustic, the retired industrial space had all the charm a small-business woman looking to run a low-key, out-of-the-way shop could want.

"I have no desire to move to the square," Wedegis said. "I don't want to be any bigger, but I love this building — I love this area."

There was just one problem: The place was a wreck.

Mold and decay had wrapped around the bones of 610 Grove St., which sat vacant for years as the warehouse operations of Sears and other businesses faded and midtown's industrial heart drifted farther away from downtown Gainesville.

The near-term focus on midtown is concentrated in the area of town ringed by Jesse Jewell Parkway, E.E. Butler Parkway, Queen City Parkway and Ridge Road.

Wedegis said she had to sink a pretty penny into getting her bakery off of the ground.

"I should have bought it because we put so much money into it," she said. "It was a mess. We had to wear full-body hazmat suits for three months. Nothing had been in here for 14 years."

But she got it done, and The Colored Egg is still down in midtown churning out quiches and cookies and others of life's good things. Wedegis came to Gainesville from New York about 20 years ago, fell in love with the town and has watched the square come back to life from its tired days in the 1990s.

"When we first moved here, the only thing that was really active was Saul's," she said.

In 2018 and beyond, others will be following Wedegis' lead in Gainesville's old midtown — working the dust and age off of the area's bones and discovering that they are strong.

With downtown flowering just a short walk away from midtown — the area is about to kick off a \$52 million torrent of commercial and residential construction on the square and nearby — it raises the question of what's next for the sleepy, former industrial hub of Gainesville.

Eyes will at first fall on the gaping hole across Grove Street from

3-25-18

Wedegis' bakery left by the demolition of the former Hall County jail.

"The jail is gone — I think that's the big, 'woohoo,'" said Gainesville City Manager Bryan Lackey.

The \$377,000 demolition headache for the city is now a multimillion-dollar opportunity. The site has been appraised at \$1.3 million, and the city has already received pitches from four developers on its future.

"Mixed-use, definitely — not on the scale that you're seeing with the Parkside on the Square building," Lackey said as he described the proposals. "I think you're looking at something that's going to be a three- to four-story building there, and it'll have a large (rental) residential component to it."

Developers have proposed concepts of 50 to 100 units on the upper floors and restaurants on the ground floor, including one idea new to Gainesville that came up repeatedly.

"Everyone is talking about the whole brewpub-type concept — probably all of them have had some kind of desire for that to be there," Lackey said.

An asking price for the property

has not been set by the Gainesville City Council. Lackey said the city will come up with its asking price and "see if they get sticker shock."

Existing businesses in midtown are eager for a project to breathe life back in the area.

"We need more activity here in this area," Maria Enriquez, owner of Maria's Income Tax, told The Times in 2017 just after the jail was demolished. "That site is large enough for someone to develop a project that combines apartments

3-25-18

with retail and a restaurant. We need more life here outside of the downtown area."

Tony Paramore, co-owner of Gainesville Paint, has also said he hopes new projects will draw more people to the industrial area that for now is dominated by the mural on the side of his business.

A mixed-use project is still some time away in the area, but in the meantime other business owners growing or moving into midtown are embracing its industrial feel, from The Colored Egg to Gainesville Paint and its DREAM BIG mural to The Chair Factory.

"People come and have their picture taken in front of the mural," Paramore said in 2017. "We want midtown to be a beautiful place that draws people to the area."

If you're wondering about that last one, the shuttered Georgia Chair factory has been resurrected as a wedding and event venue. Georgia Chair was closed fewer than two years before new owners found a use for its care-worn finishes, wooden floors and exposed brick walls.

Midtown has another resource going for it that the city plans to capitalize on in the coming years: The Midtown Greenway.

The network of paths near downtown Gainesville and stretching into midtown will help move foot traffic between the downtown square when the residential construction finishes in 2019 and midtown.

The path is also likely to become the next home for a midtown skatepark on a lot at the corner of Pine and High streets.

"We think it's a good location — it's just right off the greenway. So whoever wants to skate can be on the greenway coming down to it and go right to it," Lackey said.

The city already owns the lot, and it would help give frustrated skateboarders tired of being shooed away from private and public property in downtown a place to call home.

"Most of them are just trying to have a good time," Lackey said. "I don't think they're bad people or are trying to tear things up, they just do what they do as skaters."

Gainesville Parks and Recreation Director Melvin Cooper plans to design the skatepark in fiscal year 2019, which begins in July. Several organizations have talked with the city about providing grants to help cover the costs of construction, including the Tony Hawk Foundation.

3-25-18

Hall's master plan for parks coming together

BY LAYNE SALIBA

lsaliba@gainesvilletimes.com

Hall County and Gainesville parks systems are working on 10-year master plans to guide the future of park spaces.

Gainesville Parks and Recreation is working on its plan to identify new developments or renovations that may be needed. And while they wait on that to be completed, a five-year strategic plan is already being implemented.

Plans are well underway for a new youth athletic complex near the Allen Creek Soccer Complex, and architectural and engineering plans for a long sought-after skate park in midtown will begin soon.

Melvin Cooper, director of Gainesville Parks and Rec, said the skate park is something a lot of people are looking forward to. Cooper said it will give skaters a safe place to legally skate instead of being run off everywhere else around the city.

Hall doesn't have any plans for new parks, but Mike Little, director of the Hall parks department, said growth in the area doesn't necessarily mean changes need to come now. However, having a master plan in place ensures Hall will be prepared down the road.

"We'll have a consulting firm that does this for a living give us the map for the future of Hall County parks," Little said. "They'll look at our current inventory of parks and how many tennis courts we have, how many baseball fields, softball fields we have and they'll assess if we're going to have enough in 10 years to meet the demand and growth of Hall County."

Both systems are working on a number of renovations at existing parks.

3-25-18



Josh Rhodes and Angie Standridge walk on Saturday, March 10, 2018, along the paved trail at Laurel Park in North Hall County.

Photos by DAVID BARNES | The Times

3-25-18

Renovations at Riverside Park will be completed by the end of the month and include a new playground, outdoor fitness equipment, new walkways and some improvements to landscaping.

There are also renovations coming to Desola Park, east of downtown Gainesville. Cooper said it should only take about 90-120 days to replace the tennis and basketball courts and some of the fencing, as well as work on landscape improvements.

At the City Park Playground, a brand new concessions and restroom building will replace the one that has been there for decades. Cooper said it's long overdue, so it will be a nice update. They'll also

be adding a new shade structure, outdoor fitness equipment and free open play area to the park.

One of the more visible changes coming to city parks will be new signage as part of the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce's "Vision 2030" initiative.

Part of that initiative also involves installation of public art in the parks. One of the ideas is placing pianos painted by local artists in the parks and allowing people to play them whenever they are there.

Some of the biggest renovation projects in Hall are actually historic restorations.

Healan's-Head's Mill in Lula and the Roberts Log Home in Flowery Branch are both being worked on. The mill has entered Phase III of its renovation, which is all about getting the wheel to function. Little said they hope to have it done within the next year, but Phase IV "isn't even on the table right now," because of a lack of funding for it.

He said the Roberts Log Home, which is the oldest structure in Hall

County, is much further along in its reconstruction and is almost finished at Cherokee Bluffs Park.

"All that will continue through this (special purpose local option sales tax) cycle until 2019, 2020 when it runs out," Little said. "We will continue those upgrades and restorations, and that's happening at just about every one of our parks."

One of those parks is Murrayville Park, which closed in 2011, off Thompson Bridge Road in North Hall. The commission approved \$1.5 million in SPLOST VII funding recently, so Little said they will be moving ahead with renovations there.

He said plans for the park include dog parks, tennis courts and restoration to the baseball field and multipurpose field. They'll also be adding new bathrooms and paving along with new parking. Although he said they "haven't even started moving dirt yet," the department is hoping to have it open in the fall.

After restorations to bathrooms

and the splash pad in the summer of 2017 at Laurel Park, the parks department is looking at installing some outdoor fitness equipment.

"It's mostly resistance equipment that's made for outdoors," Little said. "Everything from pull-up bars to recumbent stuff that's resistance-based, like sit-up tables."

He said they're also hoping to add new trails in addition to the 0.9-mile paved trail the park already has.

On the southern end of the county, Cherokee Bluffs Park is nearing completion after updates it has been receiving. A dog park and playground have already been completed, and they're still working on a new nine-hole disc golf course. He said there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony once it's fully completed in the spring.

South Hall is where the main focus over the coming years will be, where Little says he's seeing the most growth. The parks department is hoping to provide more athletic facilities for the community in the southern part of the county, but

he said they'll have to wait to assess the need until after the 10-year master plan is completed.

"While we don't really have any hard and fast, concrete plans or specifics, the whole purpose of a master plan is to get information to do a needs assessment, look at what's out there in the way of things like available property, available green space," said Becky Ruffner, marketing and public relations specialist with the parks department. "Looking at different areas of the county and the populations there and how are their parks- and leisure-type needs being met?"

Hall County Parks and Leisure is always looking to acquire land in general, but in South Hall especially. As the year goes on, Little predicts the 10-year master plan will require the parks department to do just that, whether it's for development or simply conservation.

"We put a very high value on green space," Little said. "Any green space we can get, as much as we can get and preserve."

3-25-18

Groups address housing obstacles

Meetings planned to combat possible discrimination in Gainesville

BY JOSHUA SILAVENT

jsilavent@gainesvilletimes.com

Some community leaders say the lack of affordable housing that plagues Gainesville is compounded by possible discrimination.

A series of meetings and training workshops are being held, with the goal of educating residents and galvanizing the city into action.

"It's important for us, the Newtown Florist Club, to carve out a piece that we felt was significant enough for us to move



Johnson

on in many different ways," Rose Johnson, the club's executive director, said to open the first of three meetings on the subject Thursday, March 22.

The longtime civil rights organization focused on promoting youth development and organizing for social, economic and environmental justice has now established a housing committee to address the rental landscape in Gainesville.

Their work includes developing a training module so residents can learn about forms of housing discrimination,

teaching how to file complaints if residents think they've been victims of such discrimination and providing a stronger understanding of how the Section 8 housing voucher program works.

The meeting on Thursday included representatives from the Georgia Legal Services Program, which provides pro bono support for low-income families, as well as the Gainesville Housing Authority and local residents who say they have been affected by the affordable housing shortage.

"We are here to stand for the cause of decent, affordable and fair housing," said Irene Lipscomb,

who facilitated the first forum.

Lipscomb explained that the Section 8 voucher program serves millions of lower-income families nationwide by subsidizing a portion of their rent and utility costs. It's designed to assist these families in moving up the economic ladder and out of dilapidated urban environments.

Tenants in the program pay about 30 percent of their income on rent, which is a baseline the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development uses to gauge what is affordable and what is not.

■ Please see HOUSING, 6A

Community meetings

What: Series of conversations about housing discrimination in Gainesville, hosted by the Newtown Florist Club

6 p.m. April 26: Housing discrimination against families with children

6 p.m. May 24: Why some landlords deny Section 8 housing vouchers

Where: Fair Street Neighborhood Center, 715 Fair St., Gainesville

More info: 770-718-1343 or newtown193@gmail.com

3-26-18

HOUSING

■ Continued from 1A

But there is a significant stigma about the program, participants said, that has limited availability of where recipients can use their vouchers in Gainesville.

And many investors have entered the multifamily apartment market in Gainesville since the Great Recession struck, and several of these properties have exited or plan to exit a tax credit program that had kept rents low.

Additionally, these complexes are no longer accepting Section 8 housing subsidies.

Jackie Lipscomb, Irene's daughter, explained that there are federal prohibitions in place for discriminating in housing based on race or color, religion, gender, national origin, family status such as a single mother, and disability.

But Jackie Lipscomb said that doesn't necessarily mean landlords don't discriminate and get away with it, adding that she believes it happened to her family when

they could not get accepted into an apartment or home and instead bounced between living with friends and relatives.

"My grades began to drop," she said. "I believe that no one should ever go through a situation like this."

The Rev. Antoine Harris, the co-chairman of the Newtown Florist Club Housing Committee, said discrimination is an ugly weapon that "puts you in a box and strips you of your pride and character."

He said people can also be denied housing based on their sexual orientation, and that immigrants, such as the particularly large Latino population in Gainesville, are often discriminated against.

But discrimination could also include stigmas about single mothers, individuals who are obese, or those with minor criminal histories.

"Discrimination is very, very ugly," Harris said. "This is something we can't just sweep under the rug."

Ron Sheats, also a co-chairman of the Newtown Florist Club Housing Committee, said he spent 13 years living at the former Atlanta

Street public housing complex in Gainesville, which is being redeveloped into a mixed-income property called Walton Summit.

Beyond facing discrimination, many lower-income families, particularly minorities, face an obstacle that Sheats calls "discouragement."

"It's another awful word just like discrimination," he added, and it manifests when families with a poor rental history or minor criminal history are told not to even bother to apply for housing.

Beth Brown, executive director of the Gainesville Housing Authority, which manages public housing units at scattered sites across the city, said it's important to know that as a government agency the authority has strict regulations against discrimination and discouragement.

For example, Brown said, certain criminal offenders, such as those who have successfully completed a drug court program, are actually given preference when applying for a subsidized apartment.

Moreover, the authority does not review or consider credit scores when determining an applicant's

eligibility for public housing.

"The larger problem is affordable housing, in general, and the amount of it," Brown said.

The authority's waiting list is currently closed because there are more than 1,000 names on it, which means it could be years for those at the bottom of the list to receive a home.

There isn't enough affordable housing to meet the demand for it, Brown said.

"It is the next crisis that is facing our country," Brown said. "I strongly believe that."

The problem was exemplified when residents of the former Atlanta Street public housing complex were given vouchers but had trouble finding a place to live locally.

"We know that when Atlanta Street closed that people got vouchers, but in our community, they couldn't find enough landlords to rent to them," said Wendy Glasbrenner, managing attorney for the Gainesville regional office of the Georgia Legal Services Program.

Glasbrenner added that develop-

ments that receive tax credits are required to accept vouchers, and if they are not, then residents need to contact GLSP for support.

Brown suggested reaching out to landlords to educate them and gauge their interest in accepting Section 8 vouchers as a small way to try to alleviate the shortage of affordable housing locally.

One bright spot is the opening this spring of the first units at Walton Summit, the redeveloped Atlanta Street public housing complex.

Only 40 of the 252 total units that will be available when all three phases are complete will be set at market-rate rental prices, while 39 will be public housing, and the remaining made affordable, typically for residents earning 60 percent of the area median income.

Brown said having mixed-income units at Walton Summit is what made the project affordable to build because the market rates offset the lower costs on other units.

Additionally, Section 8 vouchers will be accepted at the complex.

"(Affordable housing) is critical for communities, to build them and sustain them," Brown said.

3-26-18

WALT SNELLING | 1936-2018

Longtime voice of Red Elephants games dies at 81

Snelling was respected by fans, rivals as announcer

BY SARAH WOODALL
swoodall@gainesvilletimes.com

The Gainesville Red Elephant community has lost the voice of a local legend called the school's biggest fan.

Walter Candler "Walt" Snelling, the voice of Red Elephants athletics for more than three decades, died Wednesday, March 28, at Northeast Georgia Medical Center in Gainesville. He was 81.

"Out of my 38 years at Gainesville High School, he's the No. 1 Red Elephant fan of all-time," said Wayne Vickery, a former Gainesville coach and athletic director and close friend of Snelling. "I don't know of anyone else who has done more than what Walt Snelling has done for this community. It was phenomenal what he brought to the table."

Ask anyone in Gainesville about Friday nights at City Park Stadium, and Snelling's name will enter the conversation.

From the early 1980s until 2014, Snelling was the man behind the microphone for the Red Elephants. He called football, baseball, basketball and occasionally other sports. He took part in a number of school milestones, including the baseball program's back-to-back state championships in 2001-2002.

Without hesitation, he could recite the best seasons in the football program's history and even recount his most memorable game at Bobby Gruhn Field, when the Red Elephants defeated Avondale in 1959.

Vickery marveled over Snelling's stamina, evident in blistering cold temperatures outdoors or long evenings spent inside the gymnasium.

"In basketball, he sat right there at our scorer's

■ Please see **SNELLING, 8A**



SCOTT ROGERS | The Times file photo

Walt Snelling waves to an appreciative crowd at City Park Stadium surrounded by wife Carol, right, and family members during a special presentation honoring the longtime Gainesville High announcer.

3-29-18

SNELLING

■ Continued from 1A

table and be our PA guy for four-straight games — and I'm talking about from 4 o'clock in the afternoon to 10:30 at night," he said. "That's a long time to sit there."

Snelling decided to step down in 2014 due to ailing health.

"I spent a lot of time wearing the red. I know that, and I loved every minute of it," he said at the time.

Vickery said he was "one of a kind," often complimenting players from both teams over the loudspeaker. Even if the audience wasn't always appreciative of Snelling's style, it never phased him.

"You won't find very many PA guys to do that. I think that's what set Walt apart from other guys," Vickery said. "He bragged on an opponent, just as much as he bragged on the Gainesville High kids. That's just the kind of guy he was.

"He made them special. I think you can talk to the opposing fan base and they would tell you the same thing. Walt was not a homer, by any means."

In a September 2014 interview, Snelling said the kids were the best thing about

announcing the games.

"I love children," he said. "That's what it's all about. It's very important for the youngsters to hear their names called, because that might be the only time they get to."

Astonishingly, there was more to the man's legacy than his presence in Gainesville sports. Aside from his unique presence in the press box and vast knowledge of high school football, Snelling had a positive influence on local youth. Vickery said he would give the shirt on his back or his last dollar to any youngster in need.

"Kids have kept me here. I love them," said Snelling in a 2012 interview. "They're smarter than I am and they're better looking than I am. They're our future, and without them, we're in a heap of trouble."

Snelling built lasting relationships with the many students at Gainesville High, and made sure newcomers felt at home.

"I didn't grow up in Gainesville, moved there when I was a freshman in high school," said Victor Menocal, a 1998 Gainesville graduate and star athlete. "You know, Walt did a great job of welcoming me to the city of Gainesville, to Gainesville High School and just more importantly, made me feel comfortable and my family feel comfortable about being there, moving from a different state."

As a former offensive lineman and 1955

graduate of the high school, Snelling had Gainesville red coursing through his veins. His undying passion for Georgia Tech was just as apparent, and he sported Yellow Jacket paraphernalia on most game days.

"He used to wear that Georgia Tech hat, whether they were 10-and-0 or 0-and-10," Vickery said. "I would be surprised if he's not buried with a Georgia Tech hat or Georgia Tech coat on."

Menocal was a four-year standout for the Red Elephants baseball team (1995-1998) and went on to have a successful college career as a four-year letter winner for Georgia Tech in the early 2000s. He said he shared a special bond with Snelling in cheering on their Yellow Jackets. Menocal was once warned by Snelling to stay on his toes around Georgia diehards like Vickery.

"We'd always talk about the Yellow Jackets a lot," recalled Menocal, now a sports agent for Excel Sports Management.

Though Vickery and Snelling rooted for rival college teams, the two friends always met in the middle at their favorite local eateries of Longstreet Cafe and Inn Between Deli, across from City Park Stadium.

Yet the "clean, old-fashioned hate" still occasionally reared its head in the form of a friendly prank. Vickery recalled in 1990, when the Yellow Jackets split a national title

with Colorado, his inner Bulldog got the best of him one day while on a ski trip out west. He purchased a T-shirt of the co-national champion Buffaloes from a gift shop and gave the shirt to Snelling when he returned.

Snelling, of course, was not too fond of the gesture.

"You probably couldn't print the four-lettered words he'd say about that shirt," Vickery said with a laugh.

Born Nov. 11, 1936, in Auburn, Ga., Snelling became part of Red Elephant Nation after his family moved to Gainesville from Jefferson when he was age 6. From then, he developed his fandom for Gainesville High sports.

Snelling graduated from then-North Georgia College and served in the U.S. Army before becoming Gainesville's parks and recreation director. Later, he was part of the fuel business. During that span, he found the booth.

"He will truly be missed, I guarantee it," Vickery said.

Snelling is survived by his wife, Carol, two sons Mike and John, and daughter Sally Jackson.

Visitation is set for 9-11 a.m. Saturday in the Fellowship Hall of First Baptist Church in Gainesville with the funeral to immediately follow. Burial will take place at Alta Vista Cemetery.

Staff reporter Jeff Gill contributed to this story.

Bear on the Square mountain festival

When: April 20-22

Where: Dahlonge square, Dahlonge

How much: Festival entry is free, \$5
auction entry fee

More Info: bearonthesquare.org

Sets At Sunset

When: 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. April 28

Where: Lake Lanier Olympic Park, 3105

Clarks Bridge Road, Gainesville

How much: \$30 general admission; must
be 18 or older

More Info: setsatsunset.com

Spring Chicken Festival

When: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 28

Where: Downtown Gainesville square

How much: Festival entry is free, \$5 "cluck
card" for 10 pieces of chicken

More Info: gainesville.org/spring-chicken-festival

3-29-18

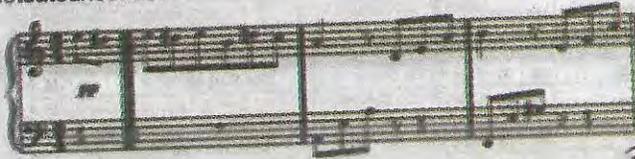
Sets at Sunset Music Festival

When: 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. April 28

Where: Lake Lanier Olympic Park, 3105 Clarks Bridge Road,
Gainesville

How much: \$30-700

More Info: 678-592-7320, info@setsatsunset.com, www.setsatsunset.com



3-29-18

Sets At Sunset

Love dance music and festivals but hate driving to Atlanta or beyond? You're in luck, because Sets At Sunset is bringing the party to Lake Lanier Olympic Park on April 28.

Next month, Sets At Sunset focuses on the house, techno and trance subcategories. This year, the Olympic Park has partnered with Do Not Sit On the Furniture, a nightclub based out of Miami, Fla., for the

artist showcase.

There will be food trucks and other vendors in addition to a revamped waterfront with yoga sessions, inflatables and boat rentals. A stream of the festival with movable virtual reality 360 cameras will be available online for those who can't make it. 3-29-18

Walt Snelling

Died March 28, 2018

Walt Snelling was a man of great worth. He loved this family, his community, his nation and above all his Lord. He went to be with his Lord March 28, 2018.



Walt attended Gainesville City Schools, graduating from Gainesville High School in 1955. He graduated from North Georgia College with honors in 1959. He served as an officer in the United States Army on active duty and reserve duty for 12 years.

Walt lived a life full of service to the church and community. He was a member of the Anglers Sunday School Class where he served as President. He was a deacon in the church and served on many committees.

He was Gainesville Park and Rec Director for several years leaving that position to go into private business.

He coached midget, middle school and JV sports teams touching the lives of many young people in a most positive way. Walt also organized adult softball leagues. He was the announcer for all Gainesville High School sporting events and became known as the "Voice of the Red Elephants."

Through the years he received much recognition, honors and awards for his contributions to the community.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Carol Snelling; his sons, Michael (Tammy) Snelling and Jon (Sandy) Snelling; daughter, Sally Jackson; grandchildren,

Elizabeth, Ryan and Luke Snelling, Tim and Susan Snelling, Caroline Jackson Oliver (Josh) and Will Jackson; sister, Linda Cobb; and a legion of cousins, nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to NEGMC Hospice, 2150 Limestone Parkway, Gainesville, GA 30501; the New Music Suite renovation project at First Baptist Church of Gainesville, 751 Green St. NW, Gainesville, GA 30501; or Gainesville Athletics, 830 Century Place, Gainesville, GA 30501.

The family will receive friends on Saturday, March 31, 2018, at First Baptist Church Banquet Hall from 9-10:45 a.m. A celebration of his life will be held in the church sanctuary at 11 a.m. on Saturday, March 31, 2018. Interment will be at Memorial Park Cemetery. Dr. Bill Coates will officiate.

Online condolences can be made at www.memorialparkfuneralhomes.com. Memorial Park North Riverside Chapel, 989 Riverside Drive, Gainesville, GA 30501. 770-297-6200.

Memorial Park North Riverside Chapel, Gainesville

Sign the online guest book at gainesvilletimes.com.

*The Times, Gainesville, Ga.
March 30, 2018*

