

open line

a monthly newsletter for you, our residents.

FEBRUARY 2024



City of Auburn



"A deer walks into a townhouse..." stories from Auburn Animal Control

Krista Weldon had her quarry in her sights: a white-tailed deer resting unaware on the ground. The animal had only turned and noticed her when she squeezed the trigger. As the deer started to bolt, her team slammed the bedroom door shut.

Weldon and her crew weren't out in the woods, but a townhouse. And this wasn't a hunting trip — it was a rescue call.

The Auburn Animal Control division manager was in a home off Gatewood Drive in December 2020, helping a resident safely remove a deer that had careened into a window at his townhouse and become stuck in the property.

"It had busted in. (The homeowner) comes home to find ... the mess from where the window is busted and everything is arrayed in the house," Weldon said.

The resident then checked his bedroom before spotting the deer, slamming the door and running outside to call Animal Control. Weldon and her fellow officers responded to the call, determining the best way to remove the deer from the house was to tranquilize it.

A tranquilizer dart can take up to 15 minutes to work on a white-tailed deer — a long time to wait when someone's house is on the line. With a clean shot from Weldon, eventually the animal was removed from the townhouse and released back into its habitat without any more damage to the home.

The call on Gatewood Drive was one of many memorable calls that the City of Auburn's Animal Control Division has

handled in recent history. The division has just three employees: Weldon and officers Michele Aultman and Frankie Walther.

In their time, they've seen it all, including eagles, owls, coyotes, foxes, racoons, snakes, monitor lizards, more dogs than you can count and more cats than you can trap.

But some calls stand out — requiring creative thinking, unusual equipment and, often, a lot of hard work.

One of these calls came this past September, when Aultman found herself strolling down a grassy patch off Academy Drive, followed by a string of longhorn cattle. A tree had fallen on a fence at a cattle farm in northeast Auburn, and the cattle had walked from the property to the side of a residential traffic circle.

Cattle and other large livestock can be complicated for Animal Control because the division doesn't keep trailers and other equipment needed on rare occasions to transport the animals, which can weigh more than a ton.

So, responding to the call, Aultman turned up with the best tool for the job — a five-gallon bucket.

"They were all browsing on fresh grass because it's a new subdivision, and that stuff's so sweet when it's new grass. They were pretty content and happy where they were, but nothing is as good as what I might have in a bucket," Aultman said, laughing.

Weldon cut in, "Rocks in a bucket works wonders."

"I had a bucket but I didn't have any sweet feed, which is what cows will prefer over sweet grass," Aultman continued. "You have to be careful with the size rocks you choose



Animal Control Officer Michele Aultman holds a young opossum.

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(continued) because they can tell the difference if it's a big rock.

"It has to sound like it might be feed, you know what I mean? If they discover that it's not, you're cooked."

Though all of the Animal Control staff can respond to calls involving livestock, Aultman has the most experience dealing with large animals. With her know-how, she quickly had the cattle walking single file back toward their farm.

These are just a few of the instances where Auburn Animal Control officers have gone above and beyond helping residents and animals in the City.

In the past year, they've responded to 1,371 service requests. Most are routine: welfare checks, neglect issues, picking up lost pets or stray animals, helping residents with wildlife issues and other service calls.

The work they do each day helps ensure the health and safety of both Auburn residents and their companion animals. Animal Control can be reached at 334-501-3090 or by emailing webenvirsvc@auburnalabama.org. You can report missing pets through the Auburn FixIt app.



Animal Control Officer Frankie Walther poses with a red-tailed hawk.

READ MORE ONLINE.

This story was trimmed for print. Read an extended version at openline.auburnalabama.org.



"BE MY VALENTINE" CRAFTERNOON

Wednesday, Feb. 14, 3:30 p.m.

Enjoy festive music and sweet treats while making a valentine for your special someone! PreK-6, but all are welcome. No registration required.

READER'S REVIEW VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB

Meet new friends around great books and fun chats at this monthly book club for adults! Book selections cross all genres from fantasy to mystery to mainstream fiction. Join us virtually on Tuesday, Feb. 20, at 5:30 p.m. to discuss "Lessons in Chemistry" by Bonnie Garmus. Registration is required in advance. Registration links may be found at auburnalabama.org/library/events-and-programs.

All library programs are free and open to the public. For more information, email libraryevents@auburnalabama.org or call (334) 501-3296.

Renew your Auburn business license by Feb. 15

If you own a business in Auburn, remember that your 2023 City of Auburn business license expired on Dec. 31. Business licenses are renewable online beginning Jan. 1, 2024, by visiting auburnalabama.org and clicking the PAY icon.

If this is your first time using our Citizen Self Service portal, you must first register your account and contact the Revenue Office to link your business license account to your registered username (instructions are available online). If you cannot renew online, contact the Revenue Office at revenue@auburnalabama.org or (334) 501-7239 for further assistance.

Please note, the last day to renew your 2024 business license on time is Thursday, Feb. 15.

Citizens' Academy apps open Feb. 5

You're invited to get a closer look at how your local government operates during the 2024 Auburn Citizens' Academy. Connect with fellow community members while getting a behind-the-scenes view of things like the water treatment process, the ins and outs of our municipal court, our traffic control center and so much more!

Citizens' Academy is a program that gives Auburn residents the opportunity to learn about each of the City's departments through tours, presentations and conversations with those who help make Auburn the vibrant community you know it to be.

Applications will be available starting Feb. 5, and a full class schedule will be available at that time, with sessions running from March to September. Those who apply should be able to commit to attending the majority, if not all, of the sessions. Sessions will occur on weekdays, and applicants should receive approval from their employers to participate in the program, if necessary.

Find more information and apply at auburnalabama.org/academies.

HOW MANY ROOMMATES MAY I HAVE?

There are three zoning districts in Auburn that only allow up to two unrelated people to live in a single dwelling. Those districts are **Neighborhood Conservation (NC), Limited Development District (LDD) and Development District Housing (DDH). All other zoning districts allow up to five unrelated occupants.**

FIND OUT IF THESE LIMITATIONS AFFECT YOUR PROPERTY



VISIT [WEBGIS.AUBURNALABAMA.ORG/RESIDENTIALOCCUPANCY LIMITS](https://webgis.auburnalabama.org/residentialoccupancylimits) OR CONTACT INSPECTION SERVICES AT (334) 501-3170 OR WEBCODES@AUBURNALABAMA.ORG



Get a free tree this Arbor Day

Celebrate Arbor Day by contributing to Auburn's tree canopy! The Auburn Tree Commission and Auburn Public Works will hold the annual Arbor Day Celebration on Saturday, Feb. 24.

Species available will be Chinkapin oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*) and Chickasaw plum (*Prunus angustifolia*) — free while supplies last! Planting instructions will be included with each seedling. Locations and pickup times will be posted on the City's website, auburnalabama.org, and social media channels, @CityofAuburnAL, closer to the date.

The Tree Commission is made up of Auburn residents who are appointed by the Auburn City Council. The Commission advises the City on proper tree care and planting and is committed to the growth and preservation of the urban tree canopy.

The National Arbor Day Foundation has recognized the City of Auburn as a Tree City USA for the last 39 years. The City's tree canopy is essential for quality of life for residents, and you can play a role in its protection and expansion.

For more information, contact the Public Works Department at 334-501-3000 or webpw@auburnalabama.org.

Daddy Daughter Date Night 2024

The 34th-annual Daddy Daughter Date Night is quickly approaching. Daddy Daughter Date Night 2024 will be held from 6:30-9 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 2, and Saturday, Feb. 3. This year's event will be held in the brand-new indoor facility at our Wire Road Soccer Complex, located at 2340 Wire Road.

The 2024 theme is "Stay Wild" and will feature a green and gold jungle/safari theme. Come and dance the night away with your father figure! Enjoy food, music & dancing, have your photo taken and visit with special guests.

Tickets are available online at auburnalabama.org/parks/register. Tickets are non-transferable and cannot be resold or given to another family. All ticket sales for the event are final, and tickets are only valid for the night purchased.

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FEBRUARY 2024 upcoming events

Open Line is produced by the Office of the City Manager
334.501.7268 | openline@auburnlabama.org

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	<p>Auburn Public Library auburnlabama.org/library</p> <p>City Meetings auburnlabama.org/boards</p> <p>Parks & Recreation auburnlabama.org/parks</p> <p>Citywide Events auburnlabama.org</p>	<p>Programs & events are subject to change.</p> <p>Find up-to-date information at auburnlabama.org.</p>		<p>1</p> <p>Toddler Tales Thursdays @ 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Lullabies for Little Ones Thursdays @ 1 p.m.</p> <p>#TeenTrends (Grades 7-12) Thursdays @ 4 p.m.</p> <p>City Council Agenda Review Meeting 4 p.m.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Puppet Shows (in person/virtual) Fridays @ 9:30 a.m. & 3:30 p.m.</p> <p>Tree Commission 11:30 a.m.</p> <p>Daddy Daughter Date Night @ Soccer Complex</p>	<p>Family Story Time Saturdays @ 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Untidy Tales Saturdays @ 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Movers & Shakers Saturdays @ 1 p.m.</p> <p>Author Talk 2 p.m.</p> <p>Daddy Daughter Date Night @ Soccer Complex</p>
4	<p>5</p> <p>Planning Commission Packet Meeting Noon</p> <p>Movie Matinee @ 3:30 p.m.</p> <p>Cemetery Advisory Board 4 p.m.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Preschool Story Time Tuesdays @ 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Parks & Recreation Advisory Board 11:45 a.m.</p> <p>PreK in PJs Tuesdays @ 1 p.m.</p> <p>S.T.E.A.M Lab (Grades K-3) Tuesdays @ 3:30 p.m.</p> <p>Committee of the Whole TBD</p> <p>City Council 6 p.m.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Baby's 1st Story Time Wednesdays @ 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Untidy Tales Wednesdays @ 1 p.m.</p> <p>Culture Explorers Club (Grades 4-6) Wednesdays @ 4 p.m.</p> <p>Board of Zoning Adjustment 4:30 p.m.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Planning Commission 5 p.m.</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>
11	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Historic Preservation Commission 4 p.m.</p> <p>High School Book Club (Grades 10-12) @ 4:30 p.m.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>"Be My Valentine" Crafternoon @ 2 p.m.</p>	<p>15</p> <p>City Council Agenda Review Meeting 4 p.m.</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Adult Create! @ 2 p.m.</p>
18	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Library Board 10 a.m.</p> <p>Greenspace Advisory Board Noon</p> <p>Reader's Review Virtual Book Club 5:30 p.m.</p> <p>Committee of the Whole TBD</p> <p>City Council 6 p.m.</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Water Works Board 4 p.m.</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Author Talk 2 p.m.</p>
25	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>City Council Agenda Review Meeting 4 p.m.</p>		

Background Photo:
A member of the 2023 Citizens' Academy class helps patch asphalt.