



Open Line

a newsletter for you, our residents



Auburn Toy Drive continues uplifting families

For many Auburn families working hard to make ends meet, the holidays can bring more worry than wonder. The Auburn Toy Drive helps lift that burden, giving families something priceless: dignity, joy and a holiday filled with hope.

Auburn Public Safety's annual toy drive started in the 1970s when Lt. John Dunn and his wife, Estelle, created the Toys for Tots fundraiser. Dunn was already well known for his community involvement outside of work with organizations like the Boys & Girls Club of Lee County and Auburn Day Care Centers. That dedication to the community expanded as he and Estelle led the charge to collect gifts to share with Auburn families.

"The Auburn Toy Drive has only picked up steam since then," said Auburn Police Chief Cedric Anderson.

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November holiday closures & schedules

Most City facilities will be closed on Tuesday, Nov. 11, in observance of Veterans Day and Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27 and 28, in observance of Thanksgiving.

Downtown parking will be free on both holidays. Public Safety services, including police, fire and communications will remain on their regular schedules. Garbage, trash and recycling pickup routes will be adjusted as follows:

VETERANS DAY

Monday, Nov. 10	Monday's route
Tuesday, Nov. 11	HOLIDAY
Wednesday, Nov. 12	Tuesday's route
Thursday, Nov. 13	Wednesday's route
Friday, Nov. 14	Thursday's route

THANKSGIVING WEEK

Monday, Nov. 24	No change
Tuesday, Nov. 25	No change
Wednesday, Nov. 26	No change
Thursday, Nov. 27	HOLIDAY
Friday, Nov. 28	Thursday's route

The Auburn Public Library will be closed on Nov. 11, 27 and 28. Book drops will remain open, and the online collection of e-books, e-audiobooks and digital magazines are always available at auburnal.gov/library. Visit auburnal.gov/parks for Parks and Recreation facility closures and holiday hours.

REMINDER: New solid waste rates

As a reminder, garbage, trash and recycling collection rates changed on Oct. 1. What does this mean for you?

- Residential curbside service is now \$32 per month.
- Those with a medical waiver for backdoor collection will pay the same fee as curbside service — \$32.
- For backdoor collection customers without a medical waiver, the rate will be \$69.50 per month.

Find more information at auburnal.gov/es. Questions? Reach out to Auburn Environmental Services at 334-501-3080.

(continued) Dunn and his wife continued to champion the effort until he retired in 1992. Detective Cpl. Lee Hodge stepped up to the plate to carry on Dunn’s legacy. He carried the torch until 2007 when Public Safety Assistant Debbie Hoyett and Lead Records Clerk Sheree Huey continued the tradition. Hoyett retired in 2022 and passed the reigns to former Public Safety Public Relations Specialist Sidney Hancock for the 2023 Auburn Toy Drive. Hancock expanded the event and invited community members to participate in the joy by volunteering.

“What made it even more special was seeing parents who were registered to receive toys also step up to volunteer, giving back to other families in need while receiving support themselves,” Hancock said.

That year, Public Safety ended up with enough toys to help the registered families, including those on a wait list, and still had trailer loads to donate to local nonprofits like the Domestic Violence Intervention Center and the BigHouse foundation.

In 2024, Sgt. Heather Dean and Administrative Assistant Brooke Wharton led the event efforts. Last year alone, the Auburn Toy Drive served 312 families, bringing holiday joy to 641 children, thanks to the support of more than 80 dedicated volunteers from across the community.

The event will return this December, giving community members another chance to make an impact right here at home. Here’s how you can help:

- **Donate.**
Drop off newly purchased, unwrapped gifts throughout November at the Auburn Public Safety Building at 141 N. Ross St. or any Auburn Fire Station.
- **Volunteer.**
Sign up to help sort donations into age-appropriate categories then prep toys for pick up at auburnal.gov/toy-drive.
- **Register.**
Register a child to receive a gift at auburnal.gov/toy-drive starting Nov. 1 through Nov. 22.

“It’s been an honor to be part of a legacy that has impacted so many families in our community,” Anderson said. “And we can’t wait to touch even more lives this holiday season.”

For more information, follow Auburn Public Safety on social media @COAPublicSafety.

Veterans Day Ceremony

You’re invited to honor those who have served our country at the 2025 Veterans Day Ceremony on Tuesday, Nov. 11. The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. at the Veterans Memorial located at the northeast corner of Ross Street and Glenn Avenue.

Attendees are encouraged to park at Felton Little Park, the East Glenn Avenue Municipal Parking Lot and at the Douglas J. Watson Municipal Complex. Accessible parking will be available on Ross Street between Glenn Avenue and Harper Avenue, which will be closed to through traffic during the ceremony. In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held in the Council Chamber at 141 N. Ross St.



Keep in mind that scooters, bikes, skateboards and other similar things are NOT allowed on sidewalks in the Downtown Business District. Help keep our sidewalks and roadways safe for all this fall by following the rules of the road! And remember, violators can be ticketed.

The Downtown Business District’s boundaries are Glenn Avenue on the north, Wright Street (between Glenn and Magnolia Avenue) and College Street (between Magnolia and Thach Avenue) on the west, Thach Avenue on the south and Gay Street on the east.

Board & commission vacancies

The Auburn City Council is looking for volunteers to serve on the Tree Commission and Educational Building Authority. Vacancies will be filled at the Oct. 21 City Council meeting.

Applications will open on Sept. 17 and close on Oct. 13. Find more information and apply at auburnal.gov/boards.

Fall Into Fun with Parks & Rec

November is here, and Auburn Parks and Recreation is busy bringing fall fun and holiday cheer to the community! Mark your calendars for a season of exciting programs, festive events and opportunities to enjoy our beautiful parks and facilities.

The 2026 Auburn Parks and Recreation **Spring Brochure** will be available in all Parks and Recreation facilities and online at auburnal.gov/parks beginning Nov. 3. This comprehensive guide includes everything you need to know about upcoming programs, athletic opportunities, art classes and special events. Families are encouraged to browse the brochure early to plan their winter and spring schedules. Registration for all spring programs will open Dec. 2.

Make the season extra special by participating in **Letters to Santa**. Starting Nov. 17, brightly decorated Santa mailboxes will return to Lake Wilmore Park, the Harris Center and Boykin Community Center. Children are invited to drop off their holiday wish lists through Dec. 15. Postage isn’t required, but parents should make sure their child’s full name and return address are clearly written on each letter, as Santa will send a personalized reply to every child who writes to him.

For those looking to start their holiday shopping, Auburn Parks and Recreation invites you to the 19th-annual **Holiday Art Sale** on Nov. 22, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.



at the Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center and the Frank Brown Recreation Center. This much-anticipated event is free to the public and showcases the talent of local and regional artists, offering a unique selection of handmade gifts, seasonal decor, ceramics, jewelry, textiles and fine art.

Whether you’re planning for the new year, starting holiday traditions or searching for that perfect handmade gift, Auburn Parks and Recreation has something for everyone this November. Stay connected by visiting auburnal.gov/parks or following @COAParksAndRec on Facebook and Instagram.

Adjusting to shorter days

With more of us out after dark as the days end earlier, please help keep yourself and others safe this season by reporting street light outages and wearing reflective gear when walking or biking!

STREET LIGHTS

Most streetlights in Auburn are owned and maintained by Alabama Power. You can report an outage by contacting them at 1-800-245-2244 or visiting customerservice2.southerncompany.com/Outages/Report. You can also report outages through the Auburn FixIt app (auburnal.gov/fixit) or by calling our Engineering Services Department at 334-501-7390, and we will pass that information on to Alabama Power.

REFLECTIVE GEAR

Walking or biking on city streets or adjacent rights of way? Auburn City Code requires everyone walking or running after dark to wear reflective material between the waist and shoulders on both front and back. Bicyclists are required to have a headlight on the front of their bicycles and reflectors on the front and rear spokes of the wheels and pedals of their bikes.



NOVEMBER 2025

upcoming events

Open Line is produced by the
Office of the City Manager
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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	Background Photo: Veterans Memorial Monument		Auburn Public Library auburnal.gov/library City Meetings auburnal.gov/boards Parks & Recreation auburnal.gov/parks Citywide Events auburnal.gov	Programs & events are subject to change. Find up-to-date information at auburnal.gov .		1 Family Story Time Saturdays @ 9:30 a.m. Untidy Tales Saturdays @ 10:30 a.m. Movers & Shakers Saturdays @ 1 p.m.
2		3		5	6	8
	Curiosity Crew Mondays @ 3:30 p.m. Cemetery Advisory Board 4 p.m.	Parks & Recreation Advisory Board 11:45 a.m. S.T.E.A.M. Lab Tuesdays @ 3:30 p.m. Bedtime Buddies Tuesdays @ 6 p.m. Create! Marbled Tote Bags 5:30-7:30 p.m. Committee of the Whole TBD City Council 6 p.m.	Baby's 1st Story Time Wednesdays @ 9:30 a.m. Awesome Art Wednesdays @ 4 p.m. Board of Zoning Adjustment 4:30 p.m.	Toddler Tales Thursdays @ 9:30 a.m. Lullabies for Little Ones Thursdays @ 1 p.m.	Puppet Shows Fridays @ 9:30 a.m. & 3:30 p.m. Tree Commission 11:30 a.m.	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	Planning Commission Packet Meeting Noon	Veterans Day Ceremony 10 a.m. @ Veterans Memorial Monument Historic Preservation Commission 4 p.m.		City Council Agenda Review Meeting 4 p.m. Planning Commission 5 p.m. Teen Night (Ages 13-18) 6-7:30 p.m.		Create! Marbled Tote Bags 2-4 p.m.
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	Letters to Santa Begins	Auburn Public Library Board 10 a.m. Greenspace Advisory Board Noon Chapter Chats Book Club 5:30 p.m. Committee of the Whole TBD City Council 6 p.m.		Water Works Board 4 p.m.		Holiday Art Sale 9 a.m.-4 p.m. @ Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center & Frank Brown Recreation Center
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30				City Council Agenda Review Meeting 4 p.m.		