

# open line

a monthly newsletter for you, our residents.

DECEMBER 2024



City of Auburn

## introducing our **NEW AUBURN PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTOR**



The Auburn Public Library welcomed a new director on Oct. 1 as the former director, Tyler Whitten, retired after 25 years of service. He passed the torch to Cynthia Ledbetter who entered the new role with nearly 28 years of library experience.

"We are fortunate to have longstanding and dedicated librarians in leadership at

the Auburn Public Library who have public service at the heart of everything they do," said Auburn City Manager Megan McGowen Crouch. "I'm grateful for the years Tyler invested in our community, and I look forward to seeing the impact Cynthia will make as she leads our library into this next season."

An Auburn native, Ledbetter began her career as a library assistant with Auburn University Libraries in 1996. She entered the field after realizing that her initial career choice of nursing wasn't quite a fit — the library world felt like a more natural choice.

"Since childhood, I have always loved the worlds you can discover through stories," Ledbetter said.

When she had the chance to transition to the Auburn Public Library in 2003, she happily took the job, excited to more directly serve Auburn's residents.

"Being able to serve my hometown has been a gift," Ledbetter said.

Ledbetter has held several roles during her 21 years with the City of Auburn, giving her a broad knowledge of the Auburn Public Library's services. She has worked in cataloging and materials selection, youth and adult

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## Ring in the season with **Auburn Parks and Recreation**

Auburn Parks and Recreation is ready to spread holiday cheer with a series of festive events this December.

The holiday season kicks off with the **Letters to Santa program**, starting on Nov. 18. Families can drop off letters in special mailboxes at the Harris Center (425 Perry St.) and Boykin Community Center (400 Boykin St.) for a magical holiday experience. Include your child's name and return address, and Santa will reply with a personalized letter. The deadline for submissions is Dec. 12.

Get in the holiday spirit with the **Jingle Jog 5K and Santa Stroll Fun Run** on Dec. 7 in downtown Auburn. Registration costs between \$15 and \$45, and same-day registration will be available starting at 5 a.m.

For some family-friendly fun, bring the kids to the **Holly Jolly Drop & Shop** at Frank Brown Recreation Center on Dec. 14. Designed for children ages 5-12, this event offers holiday crafts, games, snacks and letter writing to Santa while parents get some kid-free holiday shopping done. The event is free, but registration is required due to limited space.

Finally, wrap up the holiday hustle with the **Holiday Wrap Up** service at the Harris Center Dec. 14-20. Drop off up to 20 pre-boxed gifts, and the Parks and Recreation team will have them wrapped and ready for pick-up the same day. Choose from a selection of wrapping paper or bring your own. Spots are limited and are first-come, first-served.

Learn more about these festive events at [auburnalabama.org/parks](http://auburnalabama.org/parks).



**(New library director continued)** public services and, most recently, programming and outreach.

Over the last four years, Ledbetter has led the library's Engagement and Outreach team. The division develops, implements and promotes the library's ever-growing number of programs and events such as weekly story times and seasonal reading challenges. She has also managed grants and secured funding for initiatives, including funding that helped stock the shelves at the Boykin Community Center's micro library and outfitted the library's new outreach van. Ledbetter also played a large role in expanding the library's Third Grade Reading Dragons program, which is now in its eighth year.

Aside from her love of reading and learning, Ledbetter said the impact that libraries have on their communities is what has kept her in the field for so long.

"Libraries provide so much more than books," Ledbetter said. "Whether someone is looking for their next great read, wanting to make friends through a program or looking for help starting a business, libraries give people opportunities to reach their fullest potential. Every community deserves a welcoming place that inspires, enriches and delights them. They deserve somewhere they can learn, explore, connect and play. I believe the Auburn Public Library is that place."

Moving forward, Ledbetter is excited to see the library continue to grow as a gathering place that people want to visit. As Auburn grows, Ledbetter said the library needs of the community will only continue to expand.

"I want to see the library not only continue to provide excellent traditional services but to creatively expand services beyond the library walls," Ledbetter said. "We want to meet the community where they live, work and play."

## LOCK IT OR LOSE IT

*help prevent crime this holiday season*

As we approach the holidays, the Auburn Police Department reminds you to be vigilant and to take a few simple steps to keep your property safe. Did you know the vast majority of thefts from vehicles are a result of car doors being left unlocked? Through the Lock It or Lose It campaign, Auburn Police asks that you:

- **Remove** all valuables from your vehicle each time you leave it.
- **Lock** your vehicle.
- **Report** any suspicious activity.

You can call 334-501-3100 or 911 in an emergency to report any suspicious activity or 334-246-1391 to report information anonymously.

## December holiday closures & schedule changes

City Hall and most City facilities will be closed Wednesday, Dec. 25, in observance of Christmas Day and Wednesday, Jan. 1, in observance of New Year's Day. Public Safety services including police, fire and communications will remain on their regular schedules. Garbage, trash and recycling pickup schedules will run as follows:

### CHRISTMAS WEEK

Monday, Dec. 23 – No change  
 Tuesday, Dec. 24 – No change  
 Wednesday, Dec. 25 – HOLIDAY  
 Thursday, Dec. 26 – Wednesday's route  
 Friday, Dec. 27 – Thursday's route

### NEW YEAR'S WEEK

Monday, Dec. 30 – No change  
 Tuesday, Dec. 31 – No change  
 Wednesday, Jan. 1 – HOLIDAY  
 Thursday, Jan. 2 – Wednesday's route  
 Friday, Jan. 3 – Thursday's route

The Auburn Public Library will close at 5 p.m. on Dec. 24 and at 6 p.m. on Dec. 31. It will be closed all day on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. No library programs will be held Dec. 21-Jan. 3. Book drops will remain open, and the online collection of e-books, audiobooks and digital magazines are always available. Parks and Recreation facility hours will be adjusted during the holidays, so keep an eye on auburnalabama.org for more details.

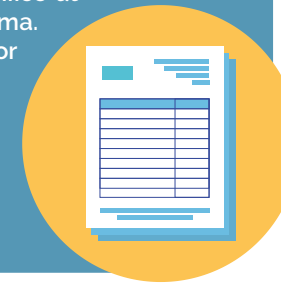
## Business license renewals

Any business providing services or selling goods within Auburn city limits is required to have a City of Auburn business license, including home-based businesses and short-term rentals. City business licenses for 2024 will expire on Dec. 31, 2024, and must be renewed by Feb. 18, 2025, to avoid late fees.

Business licenses are renewable online beginning Jan. 1, 2024, by visiting auburnalabama.org and clicking the PAY icon.

If this is the first time you are 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.

For more information, visit auburnalabama.org/revenue/business-licenses.



## Agencies affirm City's high bond ratings

The nation's top two bond rating agencies affirmed the City of Auburn's high bond ratings in October as we prepared to borrow funding for major capital improvement projects on the horizon. We scored an AA+ from S&P and an Aa2 from Moody's, placing us near the tops of their scales.

Why are we excited? And why should you be excited, too?

These high bond ratings are a signal that our local economy is strong. They allow us to get lower interest rates when we go to borrow for projects like the Lake Wilmore Community Center and Multipurpose Fields and the Boykin-Donahue Campus project. All of that allows us to do more with taxpayers' money.

Both rating agencies cited Auburn's robust economic development across a variety of industries, strong local economy highlighted by Auburn University's stabilizing presence and very strong management, financial policies and institutional framework. Also noted as support for these ratings include the City's healthy financial position, stable revenue streams, strong reserves and liquidity levels and prudent fiscal management.

## Board & commission vacancies

One vacancy on the Public Park and Recreation Board will be announced at the Nov. 5 Auburn City Council meeting and will be filled at the Dec. 3 meeting. Applications will close at 5 p.m. on Nov. 25. Visit auburnalabama.org/boards to apply or to find more information about volunteering for one of the City's boards and commissions.

## 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!

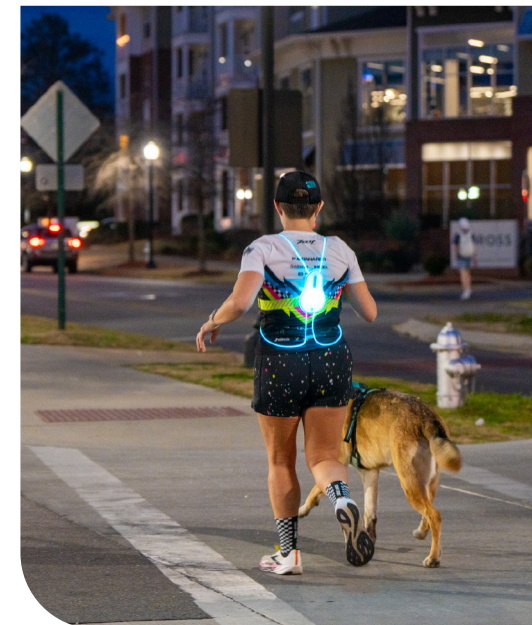
### STREET LIGHTS

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 (auburnalabama.org/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.

Be safe out there, Auburn!



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# DECEMBER 2024 **upcoming events**

Open Line is produced by the Office of the City Manager  
334.501.7268 | [openline@auburnlabama.org](mailto:openline@auburnlabama.org)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1 Letters to Santa begins	2 Movie Matinee 3:30 p.m. Cemetery Advisory Board 4 p.m.	3 Preschool Story Time Tuesdays @ 9:30 a.m. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board 11:45 a.m. PreK in PJs Tuesdays @ 1 p.m. S.T.E.A.M. Lab (Grades K-3) Tuesdays @ 3:30 p.m. Committee of the Whole TBD City Council 6 p.m.	4 Baby's 1st Story Time Wednesdays @ 9:30 a.m. Untidy Tales Wednesdays @ 1 p.m. Cultural Explorers (Grades 4-6) Wednesdays @ 4 p.m. Board of Zoning Adjustment 4:30 p.m.	5 Toddler Tales Thursdays @ 9:30 a.m. Lullabies for Little Ones Thursdays @ 1 p.m. Letters to Santa 3:30 p.m.	6 Puppet Shows Fridays @ 9:30 a.m. & 3:30 p.m. Tree Commission 11:30 a.m.	7 Family Story Time Saturdays @ 9:30 a.m. Ho Ho Ho Hike & Holiday Celebration 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. @ Kreher Preserve & Nature Center Untidy Tales Saturdays @ 10:30 a.m. Movers & Shakers Saturdays @ 1 p.m.
8	9 Planning Commission Packet Meeting Noon Daddy Daughter Date Night Tickets on Sale	10 Adults Create! 5:30 p.m. Historic Preservation Commission 4 p.m.	11	12 City Council Agenda Review Meeting 4 p.m. Planning Commission 5 p.m. Auburn Public Library closed	13	14 The Holiday Wrap Up 10 a.m.-5 p.m. @ Harris Center Holly Jolly Drop and Shop 1-5 p.m. @ Frank Brown Recreation Center Adults Create! 2 p.m.
15 The Holiday Wrap Up 1-5 p.m. @ Harris Center	16 The Holiday Wrap Up 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. through Dec. 16-20 @ Harris Center Letters to Santa ends	17 Library Board 10 a.m. Greenspace Advisory Board Noon DIY Holiday Gifts (7th-12th graders) 4:30-6 p.m. Chapter Chats Book Club (for adults) 5:30 p.m. Committee of the Whole TBD City Council 6 p.m.	18	19 Water Works Board 4 p.m.	20	21 No Auburn Public Library programs Dec. 21-Jan. 3
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	Programs & events are subject to change. Find up-to-date information at <a href="http://auburnlabama.org">auburnlabama.org</a> .		Auburn Public Library <a href="http://auburnlabama.org/library">auburnlabama.org/library</a> City Meetings <a href="http://auburnlabama.org/boards">auburnlabama.org/boards</a> Parks & Recreation <a href="http://auburnlabama.org/parks">auburnlabama.org/parks</a> Citywide Events <a href="http://auburnlabama.org">auburnlabama.org</a>	

*Background Photos:  
Children write letters to Santa last December at the Auburn Public Library*