

Open Line

A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

December 2015

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City of Auburn



Auburn a "Best Small College Town"

CollegeValuesOnline.com recently listed Auburn as #12 in a list of the 50 "Best Small College Towns" in the following press release:

"Unofficially nicknamed 'The Loveliest Village on the Plains,' Auburn is one of the fastest growing cities in Alabama. Its college-town feel and friendly Southern hospitality has earned it local and national recognition. U.S. News has named it one of the top ten places to live in the United States, and Niche.com has ranked it the number one best town in Alabama. Auburn's rich culture is visible through the many museums, theatre companies, and dance schools scattered across town. For outdoor enthusiasts, there are sixteen parks, including the lovely 700-acre Chewacla State Park in the Appalachian foothills as well as the Donald E. Davis Arboretum."



Proper Maintenance Practices for Landscaping

Tips from the Auburn Tree Commission

Proper pruning is one of the most neglected and misunderstood of all garden practices. It is an art which should be practiced as a vital part of a maintenance program for all plants. Incorrect pruning results in poor and improper growth, misshapen and unnatural plant forms, and poor flower and fruit production. Proper pruning techniques will significantly enhance the beauty of your trees, and will reduce disease and decay.

Pruning

Late winter is the recommended time for pruning non-flowering trees and evergreen shrubs. Spring flowering plants such as azaleas should not be pruned until after they flower.

When pruning, first cut the weak and spindly wood inside the plant mass near the ground. Next, prune the plant to the desired height by making cuts at varying levels, always keeping in mind the natural form of the plant. The extent of pruning needed will depend on the plant species. Some shrubs require the removal of considerable growth each year, while others require very little. It is better to prune lightly each year than to make severe cuts to a plant after several years of growth. Many old plants do not recover after severe pruning.

Some general tips for pruning include:

- remove all dead, diseased and undesirable wood
- prune annually to maintain manageable size
- prune to rejuvenate old plants which no longer flower and fruit
- prune plants that interfere with safety features in a landscape
- always prune out 40 to 50 percent of the top of a plant to compensate for loss of roots in transplanting shrubs and trees
- maintain the natural form of each species to ensure that plant character is not destroyed
- renewal - prune to cut down to 6-8 inches starting in early March

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Landscape Maintenance

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Crepe Myrtles

Many varieties of crepe myrtle exist. Although some gardeners choose to shear them into a shrub, a crepe myrtle makes one of the most outstanding small trees. Simply pruning away lower branches sculpts the crepe myrtle into a tree that can reach 25 feet or more, depending on variety. Crepe myrtles are fairly fast growers and produce an abundance of flowers between July and September, with flower colors ranging from white to pink, purple and watermelon red. Selecting the color that you want to grow will keep you from having to prune the top. Pruning of lower canes, previous unwanted cross pruning and dead branching is suggested.

Pruning crepe myrtles to a stump will result in crowding of branches that encourages insects and disease and is detrimental to the health of the tree.

Mulching

Planning before you plant a tree in your landscape may be one of the most important aspects to improving your home surroundings. Your landscape plan should include both pruning and mulching. Proper mulching is also an important part of tree care. Mulching offers several advantages, the greatest being conservation of soil moisture. Other important advantages of mulching are weed control, insulation of roots by moderating soil temperature and adding nutrients to the soil as mulch decays.

- Use the same technique each time you mulch, spreading a layer two inches thick from the tree trunk out to the end of the planting area.
- Resist the temptation to pile mulch around the trunk to form a well. Instead, try shaping the mulch like a dinner plate, moving from the center to an outer rim.
- Heavy mulching over a period of time can result in a buildup of soil over the crown area of the plants, which is harmful to camellias, crepe myrtles, oaks, maples, etc.
- Every 3 years, rake off the old mulch before applying a new layer to prevent plant roots from developing in the mulch material.

Business License Renewals

Any business providing services or selling goods within the city limits of Auburn is required to have a City of Auburn business license. City business licenses for 2015 expire on December 31 and are required by City ordinance to be renewed no later than Tuesday, February 16, 2016 to avoid a late fee. All current business license holders will receive renewal packets in the mail in the coming weeks. Any business that does not receive its renewal packet by December 31 should contact the Revenue Office at 501-7239 to verify its mailing address and request another packet. All questions regarding business licenses may be directed to this number as well.

The City Revenue Office is located in City Hall at 144 Tichenor Avenue. Business hours are Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. except City holidays. For more information, please contact the Revenue Office at 501-7239.

Holiday Recycling

Recycling your Christmas tree is as easy as placing it at the curb. The City of Auburn Environmental Services Department will collect and recycle Christmas trees with customers' weekly curbside collections. Trees should be placed at the curb for recycling on your regularly scheduled collection day.

As long as you're recycling your tree, don't forget to recycle the boxes from your gifts this holiday season. Cardboard boxes and gift boxes are picked up curbside or may be recycled at the RecycleAuburn Drop-Off Center, located at 365-A North Donahue Drive. Please break down all boxes for recycling.

Public Safety 2015 Toy Drive

The City of Auburn Public Safety Department kicked off the 2015 Auburn Toy Drive on October 6. The program is designed to assist families in the Auburn community by providing Christmas gifts to needy children, ages 2-8. The deadline to register a child to receive a gift was November 5, but there is no deadline to donate. To donate, please bring a new toy to any Auburn Fire station or the Auburn Police Division building. Thanks to the generosity of Uncle Bob's Self Storage, two remote drop-off points have also been established at its locations at 1231 Gatewood Drive and 2020 South College Street. Please do not wrap donations. Volunteers will place the gift into an age-appropriate category before delivery, which is scheduled for the week before Christmas.

Donation Locations:

Fire Station 1
359 East Magnolia Avenue

Fire Station 2
1520 Shug Jordan Parkway

Fire Station 3
685 Ogletree Road

Fire Station 4
1299 Stoker Street

Fire Station 5
234 Technology Parkway

Auburn Police Division
161 North Ross Street

Uncle Bob's Self Storage
1231 Gatewood Drive

Uncle Bob's Self Storage
2020 South College Street



Board Vacancies

One vacancy for the **Water Works Board** will be announced at the November 17, 2015 meeting and will be filled at the December 15, 2015 City Council Meeting.

One vacancy for the **Board of Zoning Adjustments** was announced at the November 3, 2015 meeting and will be appointed at the December 1, 2015 City Council Meeting.

Two vacancies for the **Board of Zoning Adjustment** will be announced at the December 1, 2015 meeting and will be filled at the January 5, 2016 City Council Meeting.

Citizens interested in serving are encouraged to contact their City Council member or notify the City Manager's Office.



Free Parking

The end of Auburn University's Fall semester brings free parking to Downtown Auburn. Free parking will be available Monday, December 14, 2015 through Tuesday, January 12, 2016. In addition to on-street parking available throughout downtown, parking can be found on and surrounding the first floor of the Auburn Municipal Parking Deck and in the Gay Street parking lot.

Christmas and New Year's Holiday Schedules

City Hall will be closed on Thursday, December 24; Friday, December 25; and Friday, January 1 for the Christmas and New Year holidays. Public Safety services, including Police, Fire, and Communications will remain on their regular schedules. The collection of garbage, trash, and recycling for each week will not be affected by the holidays.

MEETING SCHEDULE DECEMBER

- 1 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**, 11:45 a.m., Harris Center, 425 Perry Street
Committee of the Whole, 6:55 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
City Council, 7 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 2 Board of Zoning Adjustment**, 4:30 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 4 Tree Commission**, 11:30 a.m., Chamber of Commerce, 714 E Glenn Avenue
- 7 Cemeteries Advisory Board**, 4 p.m., Harris Center, 425 Perry Street
- 8 Greenspace Advisory Board**, Noon, Harris Center, 425 Perry Street
Historic Preservation Commission, 4 p.m., DSB Conference Room, 171 North Ross Street
Board of Education, 6 p.m., AHS Multi-Media Room, 405 South Dean Road
- 10 Planning Commission**, 5 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 15 Library Board**, 2:00 p.m., Library Conference Room, 749 East Thach Avenue
Committee of the Whole, 6:55 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
City Council, 7 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 17 Water Works Board**, 4 p.m., Water Board Conference Room, 1501 West Samford Avenue

Meeting times and places are subject to change.

For more information, including a map of City meeting locations, please visit www.auburnalabama.org/boards.

ShopAuburn This Holiday Season

ShopAuburn this holiday season and keep your sales-tax dollars local. Enjoy free parking between December 14 and January 12 when you shop, dine or do business downtown. Auburn's sales tax revenue supports Auburn City Schools, funds the maintenance of roads and local infrastructure, and helps make possible community events such as Auburn CityFest.

Ward 5 Public Meeting

Councilperson Lynda Tremaine will hold her monthly public meeting for Ward 5 residents on Monday, December 7 at 5:30 p.m. at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church in downtown Auburn.

All Auburn residents are welcome, but the meeting will focus on issues of interest to Ward 5 residents. To find out what voting ward you live in and who represents you on the Auburn City Council, go to <http://www.auburnalabama.org/maps/Voting-Ward>.

Christmas Parade

Join the Auburn Chamber of Commerce and the Auburn Downtown Merchants for the annual Christmas Parade on Thursday, December 10 at 5:30 p.m. The parade will start on Thach Avenue on the Auburn campus and proceed north on College Street, through downtown. Enjoy the sights and sounds of the holiday while shopping and dining downtown.



Daddy-Daughter Date Night

The time has finally arrived! Daddy-Daughter Date Night tickets will be on sale beginning Monday, December 7! Join Auburn Parks & Recreation at the Clarion Inn & Suites for our 27th Annual Daddy-Daughter Date Night on Thursday, February 11 from 5:30 – 8 p.m.; Friday, February 12 and Saturday, February 13 from 6:30 – 9 p.m.

Girls, get ready to get dressed up and enjoy an evening of dancing, pictures, sweet treats and other surprises with your dad! Dads, you won't want to miss out on this exciting, wonderful event! Trophies will be awarded each night during our Dance Contest, along with door prizes throughout the evening. Don't miss out on your chance to win! Tickets are \$35 per couple (\$5 for each additional child) and may be purchased online. For more information, please contact Dana Stewart at dstewart@auburnalabama.org or (334) 501-2950.

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Open Line Feedback

Do you have any suggestions, feedback, or story ideas that you would like to share?

If so, please contact us at openline@auburnalabama.org or call 501-7266.

up COMING EVENTS

Due to space considerations, we are unable to publicize events that are not directly affiliated with a City department.

Auburn Public Library

For more information about these and other library programs, please call 501-3190.

Journal Making Class - Tuesday, December 1, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Learn how to turn a composition notebook into an adorable journal using scrapbook paper and decoupage. These journals make great handmade gifts for the holiday season. This class is free, but class size is capped at 10. Please register by November 30. To register or for more information, please contact Ashley at 334-501-3195 or ajbrown@auburnalabama.org.

Fractured Fairy Tales - Wednesday, December 2, 3:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., featuring *The Gingerbread Girl* by Lisa Campbell Ernst.

Forever YA Book Club - Tuesday, December 15 at 7:00 p.m., featuring *My True Love Gave to Me* by Stephanie Perkins.

Show & Tell Book Group - Monday, December 21 at 4:00 p.m. (Afternoon Group) and 6:30 p.m. (Evening Group). Everyone is free to read any book(s) – fiction or non-fiction – and present it to the group. A lively discussion ensues.

Parks and Recreation

For more information on any of the events listed, or to register for a program, contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930 or visit www.auburnalabama.org/parks.

Holiday Happenings with Parks and Recreation – This holiday season be sure to mark your calendar with all the winter fun at Auburn Parks & Recreation facilities:

- **Polar Express Holiday Celebration** – All aboard! Children ages 12 and under are invited to hop aboard the Polar Express on Saturday, December 5 at the Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center. The "train" departs at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Activities will include: arts and crafts, sweets and treats and much more! Children are encouraged to wear their favorite holiday pajamas while they participate in indoor and outdoor activities. This is a ticketed event. For more information, please visit www.auburnalabama.org/parks or contact the Arts Center at (334) 501 – 2963.
- **9th Annual Holiday Art Sale** – The Auburn Arts Association and Auburn Parks and Recreation will host the 9th Annual Holiday Art Sale on Saturday, Dec. 12 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center and Harris Center. The Holiday Art Sale offers citizens a festive and unique shopping experience with local artists selling creative, handmade works. There will be something for everyone on your Christmas list! Admission to the event is FREE for all ages!
- **Silver Bells and Silver Screen: Movies at Frank Brown Recreation Center** – Join Auburn Parks & Recreation on Saturday, December 19 from 2 – 4 p.m. and 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. for holiday movies at Frank Brown Recreation Center. Enjoy a double feature with your favorite holiday films, a character meet-and-greet before both movies and candy canes! Concessions will be available for purchase and proceeds will benefit Lee County Special Olympics. There will also be a Toys for Tots box on-site for donations. For details and more information, please visit www.auburnalabama.org/parks.

Holiday Facility Closings – All Auburn Parks & Recreation Facilities will be closed for Christmas on December 24 and 25 and for New Year's Day on January 1. All facilities will reopen for normal hours of operation on Monday, December 28 and Monday, January 4.

Save the Date!

- The **Auburn Parks & Recreation 2016 Calendar** will be available during the month of December at the Harris Center. Stop by and pick up your copy so you won't miss out on all the fun of the 2016 year!

Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center Fall Invitational – Mark your calendars for the Fall Invitational at the Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center! The Fall Invitational will be on display from November 12 – December 18. This is an invitational exhibition of new and recent works by select local and regional artists. The exhibit is FREE and open to the public weekdays from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Please contact the Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center for more information at (334) 501 – 2963 or visit us online at www.auburnalabama.org/arts.

Fit as a Fiddle 50+ Lifestyle and Health Fair – Vendor applications are now being accepted for the 3rd Annual Fit as a Fiddle 50+ Health and Lifestyle Fair to be held on Saturday, March 12, 2016 at the Harris Center from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. This FREE event offers members of the 50+ community an opportunity to visit with healthcare professionals, fitness experts, senior communities and volunteer organizations offering products and services tailor-made for them.

Local businesses and organizations interested in participating in the event as vendors may download an application at www.auburnalabama.org/parks and return it to the Harris Center by January 29, 2016 at 5 p.m. Vendor spaces are available on a first come – first served basis. All participating businesses must have a current City of Auburn business license and donate a door prize. For more information, please contact Gabby Meredith at gmeredith@auburnalabama.org or (334) 501 – 2946.

- **Adult Basketball Registration ends on Friday, December 4**

**To report street light outages,
call Alabama Power at 800-245-2244 or
visit them online at alabamapower.com**