



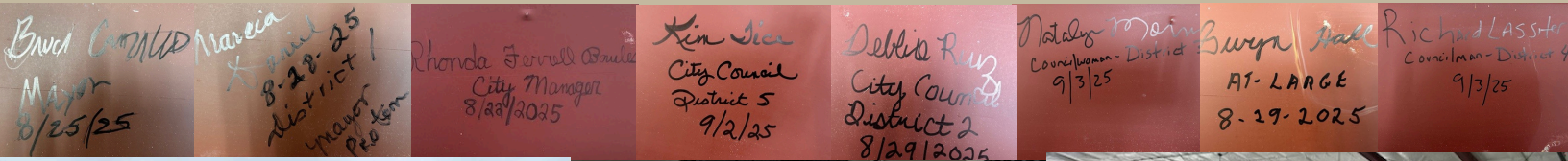
# Community Quarterly

GARDENCITY



## Community Milestone

### NEW RECREATION COMPLEX'S STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK IN PLACE!



As 2025 draws to an end, the new recreational complex is taking shape and promises to enrich the community life and provide residents with a modern facility for sports, leisure and social gatherings. A topping out or beam signing ceremony marks the placement of the final beam at the highest point of a building's structure, signifying the completion of the building's frame and recognizes the people that made it possible. Originally schedule for September, the highly anticipated ceremony for the new complex was canceled due to the constant rains making the conditions of the area extremely difficult to access safely. Nevertheless, we improvised and brought the beam to city hall for the Mayor and Council to sign, (see signatures above). Here's a look at some project updates!





# COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY CONCERNS DUE TO RAILROAD BLOCKAGES



On the evening of Friday, August 22, 2025, the Priscilla D. Thomas Way railroad crossing blockage in Garden City caused significant disruption and safety concerns to residents in the neighborhood. The train blocked the crossing at approximately 7:20 p.m. and cleared at approximately 10:37 p.m., therefore blocked for approximately 3 hours and 17 minutes.

The blockage once again sparked an outrage amongst area residents on Priscilla D. Thomas Rd. which serves as the only access route for more than twenty residents and a local mushroom farm. Residents and city leaders expressed safety concerns particularly regarding emergency response times at a press conference to address concerns related to emergency access, traffic congestion, and child and pedestrian safety.

These concerns underscore the need for better communication and coordination between railway companies and local authorities to address the impact of train operations into the ports and community safety. City officials have committed to maintaining engagement with CSX to seek solutions to the issue.



**Councilmember Morris addresses the media at press conference along with fellow councilmembers, and residents of Priscilla D. Thomas Rd.**





## PUBLIC SAFETY NEWS

### ***“Setting the Standard; GCPD First to trial New High-Speed Chase Equipment”***



High-speed chases may be necessary in certain situations and they require careful consideration management to mitigate their impact on public safety and law enforcement effectiveness. The Garden City Police Department has introduced the Grappler Police Bumper to enhance public safety efforts. The device is an advanced pursuit intervention system designed to safely and effectively stop vehicles attempting to flee from law enforcement.

The technology mounts to the front of a patrol car and deploys a strap that wraps around a suspect's tire, bringing the vehicle to a controlled stop protecting both the public and the officers. GCPD is the first agency in the area to utilize this new standard in de-escalation of high-speed pursuits. Select officers undergo specialized training to ensure the Grappler is deployed effectively and responsibly.



#### **Garden City PD's Proud Promotions!**

Left to right- Stgt. Soroken, Cpl. Jackson, Cpl. Mosley, Cpl. Shuford



## PUBLIC SAFETY NEWS

### ***GCFR Announces Promotions and New Battalion Chief Rank***

Garden City Fire & Rescue Department has announced a series of promotions including the introduction of the Battalion Chief/ Shift Commander rank which represents a pivotal change in the department's structure. This new position is designed to help oversee daily operations, manage emergency responses and serve as key liaison between firefighters and upper management. The initiative aims to improve operational efficiency, and bolster emergency response capabilities. The promotions, effective in October, recognize the hard work and commitment of several individuals who have demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and strong dedication to public safety. We would like to recognize the following recipients:

**Lieutenant:** Andrew Haschle, Joshua Knight and Andrew Jacobson

**Captain:** Kristopher Fain, John Tupper and Michael Gordon

**Battalion Chief:** Andrew Hornick, Robert Ancell and Mark Sullivan

The promotion ceremony was held on October 6<sup>th</sup>, and was filled with pride, tradition and celebration of those who continue to serve our community with excellence.

**Congratulations on your well-earned promotions!**



Left to right- Lt. Andrew Jacobson, Lt. Andrew Hassle, Capt. Michael Gordon, Capt. John Tupper, Capt. Kristopher Fain, BC Mark Sullivan, BC Robert Ancell, BC Andrew Hornick, Fire Chief Michael Dick



# STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Human Resources, also known as HR, is the department within a company or organization that is responsible for: The recruitment and selection of new employees, training, safety & performance of current employees, and managing the well-being of employees while setting the tone for culture and fostering a positive working environment. In addition, they administer employee benefits, and process payroll. This department is responsible for supporting employee's overall success. Garden City is fortunate to have on its team:

Left to right - **Nancy McBride, Human Resource Generalist, Yolanda Irizzary, HR Director,** and **Ava Blackwell, HR Assistant and Payroll Coordinator**





# Employee APPRECIATION

Each year the City of Garden City celebrates some incredible milestones with our city government staff.

Please join us this year in honoring the following employees for their unwavering commitment and for their years of service. **Thank you all for your contributions and for being an essential part of our success!**

## HONORED EMPLOYEES – 5 YEARS OF SERVICE



5 years

Jacqueline (Jackie) Williams – IT Department  
Marian R. Keister – Finance Department  
Wesley Soroken – Police Department  
Anthony W. Villegas – Police Department  
Noe Ramirez-Guerrero – Water & Sewer



5 years

## HONORED EMPLOYEES – 10 YEARS OF SERVICE



5 years



10 years

Battalion Chief Mark P. Sullivan – Fire Department

## HONORED EMPLOYEE – 15 YEARS OF SERVICE



15 years

Hiram M. Hernandez – Parks & Recreation Department

## HONORED EMPLOYEES – 20 YEARS OF SERVICE



20 years

Tonya T. Roper – Executive Department  
Leaser A. Lee – Public Works Department  
Stephen M. Williams - Public Works Department

## HONORED EMPLOYEE – 25 YEARS OF SERVICE



25 years

Benji R. Selph – Zoning and Building Department

## HONORED EMPLOYEES – 30 YEARS OF SERVICE



30 years

Chief Gilbert C. Ballard – Police Department  
Major Richard B. Hood – Police Department



20 years



30 years



GARDENCITY





## ***Building Bridges: State Delegation Dinner Hosted by Mayor and Council***

Each December the Chatham County Legislative Delegation host its annual pre-legislative forum. The forum gives residents, organizations and Chatham County municipalities the opportunity to meet their state representatives and senators and bring issues to their attention. It comes just ahead of the upcoming 2026 Legislative Session in January in Atlanta.

In being one step ahead this year, Garden City organized a State Delegation Legislative Dinner. Hosted by the Mayor and City Council, the event not only highlighted the collaboration between local government and state representatives but also served as a platform for discussing pressing issues facing our community.

The dinner was held on October 14th at The Venue and provided networking opportunities and allowed for everyone to engage in meaningful conversation. All in attendance expressed gratitude for the event noting the importance of collaboration and understanding between elected officials.

Attending the event was State Representatives Edna Jackson, and Anne Westbrook. From U.S. Senator Ossoff's office, Christian Shellman, Andrew Young, U.S. Senator Warnock's office, and Matthew Wirth from U.S. Representative Buddy Carter's office.





# ***Norfolk Southern grants \$75,000 to the City of Garden City!***

The City of Garden City is proud to announce it has received a \$75,000 grant from Norfolk Southern in support of community initiatives through its Thriving Communities Grant Program. The funding will support the construction of a pavilion on the new recreational complex and stadium serving as a multifunctional space and enhancing the complex's offerings while promoting community engagement.

This grant is part of Norfolk Southern's commitment to strengthening the communities it serves across its 22-state network. Launched in 2023, Norfolk Southern's open-application grant programs are designed to support organizations working to further the areas of safety, sustainability, workforce development, and community resilience.

"The pavilion will be of great benefit to the community and serve as a gathering area for events and increase participation and engagement among residents while also attracting visitors", says Cliff Ducey, Director of Parks and Recreation.

The Thriving Communities Grant Program supports initiatives that bolster local economies and promote long-term resilience. From sustainability efforts and job training to community-building programs, the grant empowers nonprofit and community organizations working to create lasting impact. The investment in the enhancement of community spaces help to beautify neighborhoods, increase livability, promote commerce, and attract more residents/ businesses to an area.

For more information on Norfolk Southern's Thriving Communities Grant Program, please visit the company's website at [www.norfolksouthern.com](http://www.norfolksouthern.com).





# *Garden City Senior Center*

## *Travels to Kentucky*

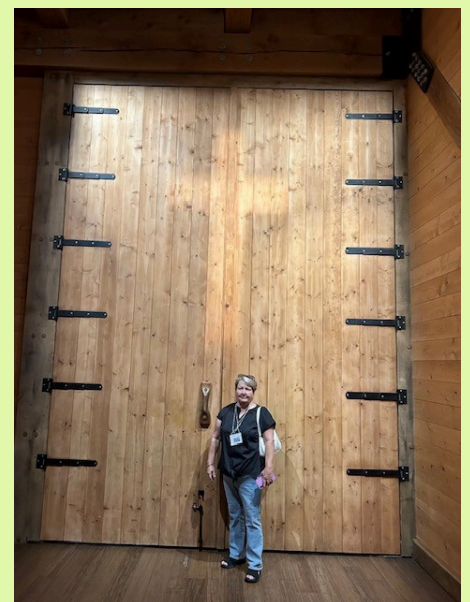
In September, twenty-eight patrons from the Garden City Senior Center traveled to Williamstown, Kentucky to visit the Ark Encounter . Opening in 2016, the Christian Theme Park is a home of a handful of attractions, but the centerpiece of the park is a life-size replica of Noah's Ark built according to the dimensions given in the Bible. At 510 feet long, 51 feet high, and 85 feet wide (converted to modern measurements), the structure houses three decks of world-class exhibits, illustrating what life aboard the ark may have been like. What an amazing and enjoyable trip!



**Garden City Senior Center group**



**Noah's Ark replica**



**Judy Roundtree, Senior Center  
Director stands at entrance to  
Noah's Ark**





### ***Youth Sports Registration***

**Register online @ [WWW.Gardencity-ga.gov](http://WWW.Gardencity-ga.gov)  
or at Garden City Gym  
402 Market St.**

**Monday –Friday 9am – 5pm (Credit/ Debit Card only)  
Please Call 912-966-7788**

**F**or

**Y**our

**I**nformation

### ***Fall Cleaning Tips for Home***

- Clean and store outdoor furniture
- Service and store gardening equipment
- Clean gutters and downspouts
- Winterize outdoor pools and water features
- Remove window screens and install storm windows
- Wash exterior and indoor windows
- Complete an outdoor home inspection
- Sweep and inspect chimneys and fireplaces
- Change smoke detector batteries
- Clean or replace HVAC filters
- Clean and reverse ceiling fans
- Clean gutters and downspouts

### ***6 Tips for Fall Lawn Care***

- Keep Mowing ! Continue to water and mow as needed.
- Fall is also an ideal time to aerate your lawn so that oxygen, water, and fertilizer can easily reach the grass's roots.
- Rake the Leaves - Fallen leaves on the lawn block sunlight from reaching it,
- Fertilize for Future Growth - if you fertilize once a year, do it in the fall. Leaves grow slow, but roots grow quickly as the weather turns cool.
- Fill in Bald Spots -Fall is also a great time of year to fix any bare, bald spots with a grass seed/fertilizer mixture.
- Weed Control - If weeds have taken over your lawn, now's the time to fight back. Apply herbicide now and weeds won't return in the spring. (read package label before use).



**ATTENTION  
PLEASE!**

**GC**  
GARDEN CITY

**ABANDONED/INOPERABLE  
VEHICLES**

ALL VEHICLES IN GARDEN CITY ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROPERTY MUST BE MECHANICALLY OPERABLE. IF SOMEBODY WANTS TO STORE A DERELICT VEHICLE ON PRIVATE PROPERTY, IT MUST BE INSIDE AN APPROVED STRUCTURE (GARAGE) OR PRIVACY FENCE ON ALL SIDES. ALL VEHICLES MUST HAVE A CURRENT TAG AND INSURANCE REGISTRATION THAT ARE VISIBLE FROM PUBLIC VIEW.

Code Enforcement  
Officers will be  
going around the  
city enforcing this  
policy.





Garden City Fire Marshal's Office  
160 Main Street  
Garden City, GA 31408  
912-966-7780



## Outdoor Burning Information

As of July 1, 2021, the outdoor burning requirements for Georgia have changed. No permit is required for hand-piled, natural vegetation/yard debris (i.e. leaf and limbs only).

Reference: City of Garden City's **Air Pollution Ordinance Sec. 30-27**

### **DO's**

- Burning must occur between the hours of 8:30 AM and sundown
- Burning must be constantly attended by someone 18 y/o or older
- Fire extinguishment equipment (e.g. garden hose connected to water supply or fire extinguisher) readily available for use
- **Only burn logs and clean wood.** Clean wood means natural wood which has not been painted, varnished, or coated with a similar material; has not been pressured treated with preservatives, and does not contain resins or glues as in plywood or other composite wood products

### **DON'Ts**

- No burning is allowed on windy days (10 mph or higher) or on days when the atmospheric conditions (cloudy, overcast, or raining) would cause the smoke to remain low to the ground
- **NEVER** leave a fire unattended
- Fires should not be started with petroleum-based products
- Burning garbage is prohibited

Fires that **DO NOT** require a permit:

- Fires used for the preparation of food (i.e. barbecuing)
- Small yard waste (10 ft x 10 ft)
- Recreational fire

Fires that **REQUIRE** a permit:

- Large yard waste greater than 10 ft
- Bonfire
- Land clearing (residential or commercial)

NOTE: City Officials may prohibit burning at times when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make burning hazardous. Even if you follow all the guidelines for burning, you may be required to extinguish the fire if it adversely interferes with another's enjoyment of life, use of property, or if someone with a health problem is affected.



# Teen Mentoring 101

Garden City Library Community Conference Room, Mondays (6 Week Session) **5:00PM - 6:00PM**

Join facilitator, Charlton Jefferson, for a 6 week mentoring program designed for students of all genders middle and high school.

Weekly topics include: Self-Identify, Career & Life Development; Introducing Yourself and Elevator Pitch; Hard Skills vs. Soft Skills; Professional Fashion and Presentation; Building Your Circle; The Company of Success; Maintenance and Continued Growth.

Limit to 70 -75 students per session, ages 13 to 18.



**LIVE OAK**  
Public Libraries





# Unwind and Create: A Coloring Escape for Adults

Garden City Library Community Meeting  
Room Friday, November 21st 1:00 PM -  
2:00 PM

Take a break from your busy day and join us for a relaxing adult coloring session coloring session. Enjoy a calm, creative space to de-stress, connect, and bring your imagination to life.



LIVE OAK  
Public Libraries



# Navigating Caregiver Burnout

Garden City Library,  
Community Meeting Room  
Wednesday, November 12th  
1:00PM – 2:00PM

In observance of National Caregiver Month, this supportive and educational program is designed to help caregivers recognize, manage and recover from the emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion that often accompanies caregiving responsibilities. Attendees will learn the signs of burnout, set healthy boundaries, prioritize self-care, and build resilience.



**LIVE OAK**  
Public Libraries

Follow Us On:







## Introduction to Intellectual Property, Patent, Trademark, and Copyrights

Garden City Library,  
Community Meeting Room  
Saturday, November 15th  
12:00PM – 1:00PM

This session is for anyone interested in legally protecting their tangible ideas, creations, and brands. We'll cover patents, trademarks, and copyrights, essential tools for safeguarding inventions, brand names, logos and creative works. Whether you're a small business owner, an inspiring author or just curious about IP, this workshop offers practical insights to help you protect your creative efforts.

Teens and adults are welcome.



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Public Libraries

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