Departments work to make 2019's big game weekends smooth

While University of Georgia home football games are always a big deal, two in particular this fall were bigger than normal. Most recently, Texas A&M visited Athens on November 23 for the first time as a Southeastern Conference school.

And then there was Notre Dame. The football game with the Fightin’ Irish – Notre Dame’s first ever trip to Athens – on September 21 broke Sanford Stadium attendance records with 93,246 attendees and thousands more outside.

A crowd this large requires even more coordination, planning, and organization from a number of ACCGov departments than normal.

Due to the large number of flights into Athens, the Airport sold over 36,500 gallons of jet fuel in the three days surrounding the Notre Dame game. This exceeded their typical monthly average of 34,000 gallons sold. The Athens-Ben Epps Airport also averaged 200 aircraft operations per day, doubling their usual daily average of 100.

On a typical weekend, Solid Waste collects 10.50 tons of trash and 10.27 tons of recycling. That amount more than doubled during the Notre Dame game weekend.

The 240 staff hours worked nearly quadrupled the hours worked on a regular weekend. Additionally, administrative staff helped with communication and monitoring litter and sidewalk trash cans downtown.

Even big dumpsters, piloted in the spring, were placed strategically to help with the flow.

“I can’t say enough about the staff,” says Solid Waste Director Suki Janssen. "They stepped up again."

Anticipating the massive crowd, Police began planning for the big game far in advance. The department utilized the existing football traffic plan that allows officers to safely move traffic away from campus and downtown. Police also used the navigation app Waze to direct traffic flows and worked with ride-share apps Uber and Lyft to designate specific pick-up and drop-off locations.

Central Services prepared by setting up mobile communications vehicles, as well as increasing the amount of connections for Public Safety 800 MHz radios and adding a number of safety personnel to respond to the game.

“Thorough testing of our plan prior to the big game also assisted in the communications operations being successful,” says Howell McKinnon (Central Services).

Altering traffic flow and placing thousands of cones are every-

Shelter dogs pay visits to departments

Doggie Day Out, a program offered by Animal Services, allows ACCGov departments to check out eligible dogs from the Animal Shelter for a day.

This program not only helps the dogs to develop social skills with humans, which increases their likelihood of being adopted, but also gives the dogs a much needed break from being at the shelter.

Central Services and Solid Waste were the first departments to participate in the program.

“We absolutely love having a dog at the office with us,” says Beth Smith (Central Services). Animal Shelter personnel select dogs that they expect to do well in an office setting.

"It’s a great stress reliever," says Veronica Hatfield (Solid Waste). The employees are asked to fill out a report card about the dog's behavior while in the office.

“It helps us learn a lot about the dogs when they go,” says Selah Gardiner (Animal Services). “We’d love for other departments to participate."

Solid Waste collected 24.08 tons of trash and 20.74 tons of recycling – about twice a normal game day amount – and spent 240 staff hours during the Notre Dame football weekend.

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Off the clock with Joseph D'Angelo

Ever since he was a toddler, Joseph D’Angelo (GIS) has been involved in archery. As a kid, he and his family would spend time shooting in the fields behind their house.

From mastering trick shots to competing against other archers, D’Angelo was always looking for a challenge. One of his favorite places to shoot was at the annual Pennsylvania Bowhunters’ Festival, where he shot against thousands of skilled archers.

Even throughout college, D’Angelo loved using archery both as a way to challenge himself and others, and as an escape. “The first time I took my wife, Karen, home to meet my folks, we used going out back to shoot as our excuse to escape their interrogation,” he says. For years, he continued shooting casually.

In 2011, he was involved in a motorcycle accident that dislocated his shoulder. “Pulling back from a bow became agony,” he says. “Holding a shooting stance for any length of time was impossible.”

Last year, D’Angelo discovered the longbow, which allows a style of “snap” shooting that cooperates with his injury, and began shooting again. He is now a member of the Traditional Bowhunters of Georgia, a group of archers that organizes activities to get kids active outside.

D’Angelo is glad to return to his favorite pastime and help others also become passionate about it.

Off the Clock features the non-work activities of ACC employees.
or cold because they all have a ballistic vest on. And they go into some places that aren’t very clean or work up a sweat chasing bad guys or standing outside for hours directing traffic. All that being said… I love them, but they stink.

If you could add something to your job to make it better/easier, what would it be?

More time in the day! Or a drive thru window for the officers in a hurry.

Is there any item in your inventory that people get the most excited about? Depends on who you are talking about. Officers love the stuff in my property closet. They are always wanting “new gear” or something new. Whenever we switch or change up gear, they all want it. I, on the other hand, love my office supply room. I was that weirdo that enjoyed going back to school in the fall because it meant buying new school stuff. It is organized and I know where everything is. Unlike my house.

Tell us about your family.

My husband Travis, two boys, Tucker and Hudson, and third baby coming in April. My husband used to work here, in patrol. He was the first officer I did my ride-along with. My husband used to work here, in patrol. He was the first officer I did my ride-along with. In dispatch, you are made to go on mandatory ride-alongs to get to know what the officers deal with on the other side of the radio. Afterwards, I thought he was grumpy and he thought I talked too much. Five years later, we got married. And here we are, 12 years...

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Promotions (effective October 6)

Animal Services: Alexandria Gardiner - Volunteer Coordinator

District Attorney: Sara Adams - Attorney I; Patrick Najjar and James Powers - both Attorney II; and Brandon Thompson - Attorney III

Economic Development:

Ryan Thornton - Business Development Coordinator

Human Resources: Steven Wilkerson - Sr. Human Resources Generalist

Police: Shawn Denmark - Senior Police Officer; Claude Johnson, III - Police Officer First Class; Drew Kovacs - Police Sergeant; and Kristy Thrasher - Communications Officer III

Public Utilities: Gregory Jackson - Utility Engineer and Kenneth Weiner - Water Reclamation Plant Supervisor

Trans. & Public Works: Joshua Black - Permit Supervisor

Births

Brandon Andrews (Probation Services) - son Jalen Ray Andrews on September 7.

Josh Edwards (Manager) - son Abe Joseph on November 15.

Charlotte Sosebee (Board of Elections) - granddaughter Kait'lyn Aremoni on November 4.

Retirements (effective December 1)

Thomas Aiken
Fire 32 years

Eddie Bazzelle
Public Utilities 23 years

(Left) Michael Thrasher
Trans. & Public Works 19 years

Sympathy

Donald "Cornbread" Anglin (Retiree) passed away on November 8. He retired from the Fire Department as Lieutenant after 29 years of service.

Bernice Gallimore Lowder (Retiree) passed away on November 9. She retired from Tax Commissioner's Office after 12 years of service.

Dana Cortez (Tax Commissioner) - father-in-law; Juan De Loen (Animal Services) - aunt.

Marriages

Kristy Dassow (Probation Services) married Sam Reed on November 9.

Accomplishments

Employee of the Quarter: Solid Waste: Susan Lyon.

Kevin Zapata (Police) received the Regional Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) of the Year for the Northeast Region of Georgia.

Michelle Carrigg (Animal Services) completed an apprenticeship in Lifesaving Leadership with Maddie’s Fund, an animal welfare organization.

Suki Janssen (Solid Waste) was elected the President of the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) Georgia Chapter until June 30, 2022.

Dale Allen and Cecily Evans (both Probation Services) graduated from the FBI-Leeda Supervisor Leadership Institute.

Get Well

Patty Bidinger (SPLOST)
The Fitness Challenge: In September, as part of the Fitness Challenge, participants were pre-tested in the 800m run, push-ups, sit-ups, squats, ring row, and plate jump. Participants then worked to improve their performance for post-testing later in mid-November. Overall Fitness Challenge champions are: Gabriel Bowen (Clerk of Court) and Jim Kethley (Public Utilities).

Pounds Are Fallin’ competition: The Pounds (and more!) Are Fallin’ health challenge is a weight, waist circumference, and blood pressure reduction challenge. Collectively, the fall 2019 group lost 2.89% in weight and reduced their waists by 114” during. The individual category champions are:

- Weight loss: Kevin McGreevy (Police) with 12.09% loss.
- Waist circumference reduction: Hope Sadler (Clerk of Court) with 18.07% loss.
- Systolic Blood Pressure Reduction: Brittney Mims (Clerk of Court) with 26.3% loss.
- Diastolic Blood Pressure Reduction: Patty Bidinger (SPLOST) with 29.63% loss.

To Your Health provides health-related notes from ACC’s Wellness Program and other sources.

Fire Department personnel including Tyler Akin, Josh Allen, Dylan Anderson, Anthony Arndt, Kelly Cahoon, Josh Carey, Nathan Carson, Chase Crawford, Alex Elvord, Adam Gardner, Ryan Grove, Tyler Haas, Dan Holtslander, Dustin Jackson, John Jeffery, Nate Johnson, Wade Jones, Clayton Mitchell, Matt Schmitz, Corey Weeks, and Will Wooden recently completed a Rescue Technician class certifying them in Rope Rescue Level 1 and 2 with the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Agency.

The class consisted of over 80 hours of intense training on advanced rescue techniques using ropes and specialized equipment.

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Firefighters get rope rescue training

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