

# THE HR NEWSLETTER

CITY OF VALDOSTA



*November*  
**2020**



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# November Birthdays



- LAVERTT OGDEN JR, 11/2
- STEVEN MICHAEL SHADRON, 11/2
- SHANDORA LASHAN GRAY, 11/3
- TONNIE BERNARD KNIGHT, 11/4
- DEVIN PARKINSON, 11/4
- ERIC SHANE WAGNER, 11/4
- BENJAMIN GRIFFIN, 11/8
- JAY N. WOLFE, 11/8
- SCOTTIE F JOHNS, 11/9
- NANCY DENISE ROBINSON, 11/9
- JOHN LYLE HERPIN, 11/10
- JIMMIE R BACON, 10/11
- CHRISTOPHER CHAMBERSS, 10/11
- CHRISTOPHER LEE SCOTT, 10/13

- BRANAM J JOHNS, 10/14
- ANTHONY JOHN DRAKE, 11/15
- DYLAN THOMAS WELCH, 11/15
- SEABRON WILLIAMS III, 11/15
- BRANDY S FLANDERS, 11/16
- JAMES ARTHUR BYRD JR, 11/18
- DAPHNE G COVINGTON, 11/18
- BRENT S NICHOLS, 11/19
- TERRENCE A HINES, 11/20
- KYLE ANTHONY HOLDER, 11/20
- JEREMIAH MCCOY SR, 11/21
- WILLIAM SUMNER, 11/21
- THOMAS GRADY COTHRON III, 11/22
- ALAN GIRSCH, 11/22
- SKYLER D ROBINSON, 11/22
- ELDRED JAMES THOMAS JR, 11/22
- LEONARDO B WARNER, 11/22
- JEFFREY E KRAUSHAAR, 11/23
- MICHAEL A PENLAND, 11/23
- ALVIN JAMES PARKER, 11/24
- WILLIAM JACKSON RICH, 11/25
- JOSHUA N HUNT, 11/26
- JOHN C BUCHINA, 11/27
- ALAN W CHRISTOPHER, 11/28
- MICHAEL E CRUMP, 11/28
- JUSTIN T DIXON, 11/28
- BRANDON L MCDUFFIE, 11/28
- CAROLYN SAMPSON-BURGESS, 11/30

- DONALD C BALDWIN JR, 11/13 42 years
- WILLIAM B SIMS, 11/03 23 years
- MARY L NEWBERN, 11/10 23 years
- LAVERTT OGDEN JR, 11/10 23 years
- JASON D ROWAN, 11/10 23 years
- JUSTIN C PLY, 11/30 22 years
- MICHAEL L WALDEN, 11/30 22 years
- MONICA N NELSON, 11/09 21 years
- CHRISTOPHER F CREWS, 11/13 20 years
- MARION J MCQUEEN, 11/06 19 years
- JUNE M GARTMAN, 11/12 19 years
- HAROLD B HENDERSON, 11/04 18 years
- MARK ALLEN FLYTHE, 11/01 16 years
- SELENA R PHINNEY, 11/14 15 years
- HEATHER BETH WILLIS, 11/14 15 years
- RICK J MEFFORD, 11/29 14 years
- THOMAS GRADY COTHRON III, 11/16 11 years
- BRANDON ONEAL MATHENY, 11/16 11 years
- SHELLEY ALAN MILLER, 11/16 11 years
- CHRISTOPHER LEE SCOTT, 11/16 11 years
- CHRISTIAN MATTHEW II STEVICK, 11/16 11 years
- RYAN MICHAEL STRICKLAND, 11/16 11 years

- REMUS S BELL, 11/23 11 years
- THOMAS M HESS, 11/30 11 years
- EDWARD A STROHL SR, 11/30 11 years
- TROY EDWARD CRIBBS JR, 11/01 10 years
- KEN T TAYLOR, 11/19 9 years
- ROBERT L HAMILTON, 11/10 9 years
- JULIE Y GRANTHAM, 11/28 9 years
- CHRISTOPHER JAMES BOONE, 11/14 8 years
- KEVIN D JENKINS, 11/04 7 years
- ALBERT LEE ANDERSON, 11/20 7 years
- GEORGE RUSSELL SIMPSON JR, 11/25 6 years
- JOEYLYNN HARLOW, 11/05 2 years
- ISAAC W AVRETT, 11/18 1 year
- BRADLEY C CHASON, 11/18 1 year

## Employee Anniversaries



# New Employees



Carly Eaves – Blood Alcohol/Drug Chemist

Sherina Ferrell – Fire Life and Safety Public  
Educator

Perry Lipscomb – SCADA Technician

John Piper – GIS Technician

## Promotions/Transfers

Deonna James – Warehouse Supervisor

Theodore Bilak – Water Treatment Plant Operator

## New Hires in the Process

Roger Williams – Part-Time Custodian

Michael lamb – Part-Time Light Equipment  
Operator

Jamarcus Pendleton – Utility Service Worker

Kewa Thomas – Refuse Collection Driver

Andre Davis – Utility Service Worker

Timothy Jeffrey – Warehouse Technician

John Blackstock – Heavy Equipment Operator



# CURRENT VACANCIES



Central Lines Supervisor

Central Maintenance Technician

Utility Locator Technician

Construction Inspector

Fire Sergeant

Fire Lieutenant

Community Risk Reduction Officer

Lead Training Officer

Crew Leader – Residential Trash

Crew Leader – Right of Way

Refuse Collection Driver

Mechanic II

Utility Service Worker – Finance

Utility Service Worker – Utilities

Part-time Groundskeeper

Crew Leader – Engineering

Maintenance Worker I – Street Maintenance

Firearms Examiner

Police Officer

*\*For more information on the jobs listed please visit our website*



# UPCOMING EVENTS

**LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE**  
*COMMUNITY*  
**CLEAN UP**

**LOCATION:** DISTRICT 3,  
NEIGHBORHOODS BETWEEN  
RIVER STREET AND HILL  
AVENUE FROM N OAK STREET  
TO ST AUGUSTINE ROAD

**DATE:** SATURDAY, NOV 7  
**TIME:** 9AM -12 PM

**BEFORE THE CLEAN UP**

- Identify areas that need attention
- Prepare to dispose of bulk trash items

**DAY OF THE CLEAN UP**

- City staff will have lawn equipment on site if needed
- Volunteer your time to help with the clean up
- Help your neighbors clean up as well

**AFTER THE CLEAN UP**

- Help maintain the clean up initiative within your neighborhood
- Become part of a Neighborhood Action Association (NAA)

For more information about the Love Where You Live Clean up Hot-Spot please call 229-671-3617

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**FOOD TRUCK**  
*Crawl*

DRIVE. EXPL. RE. DINE. PLAY.

**November 12 · 5:00 to 8:30 PM**  
*Downtown Valdosta*



**FALL ELECTRONICS  
RECYCLING EVENT!**

**FREE  
FOR CITY  
AND  
COUNTY  
RESIDENTS**

**SATURDAY,  
NOVEMBER 14**


**MATHIS AUDITORIUM  
9 A.M. - 1 P.M.**

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**FIRST  
FRIDAY**

The First Friday of each month!  
Live Music | Drinks | Shopping | Food  
5pm until

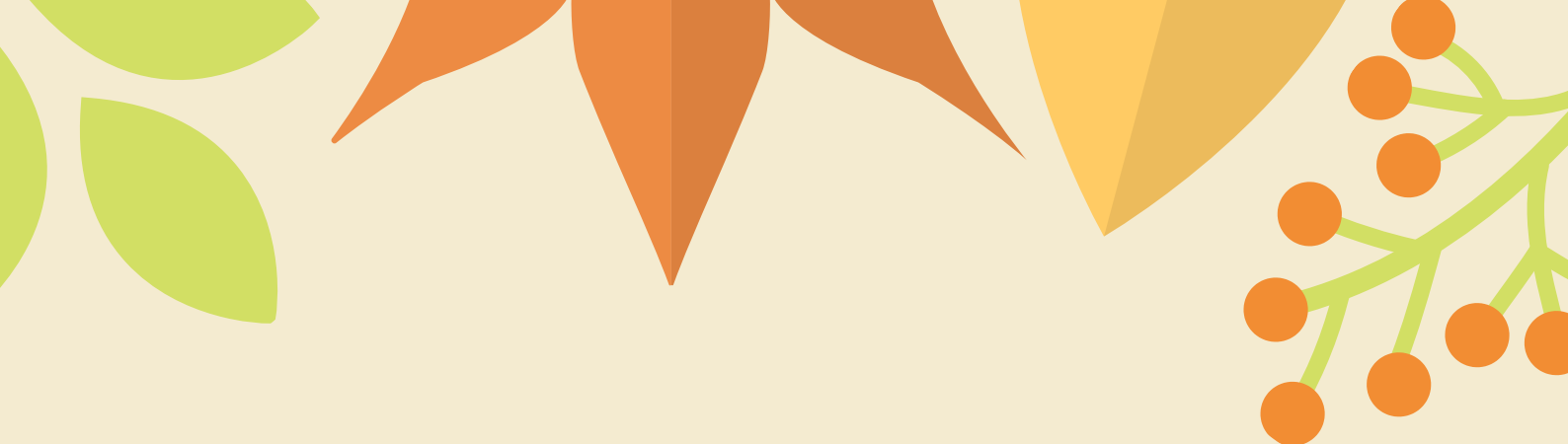


**DOWNTOWN VALDOSTA**  
**MAKERS  
MARKET**

HISTORIC LOWNDES COUNTY COURTHOUSE SQUARE

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10TH**  
9AM-1PM

**PLANTS | FOOD | CRAFTS | ART**



Mark your Calendars!

EMPLOYEE THANKSGIVING  
LUNCHEON  
NOVEMBER 13TH  
AT THE  
RAINWATER CONFERENCE CENTER

More details to follow





# **VOTING DATES AND DEADLINES**



**ADVANCED VOTING: ELECTIONS OFFICE – 2808 N OAK STREET**

**OCT 12-16 – MON – FRI – 7 A.M. TO 7 P.M.**

**OCT 17-18 – SAT – SUN – 7 A.M. TO 7 P.M.**

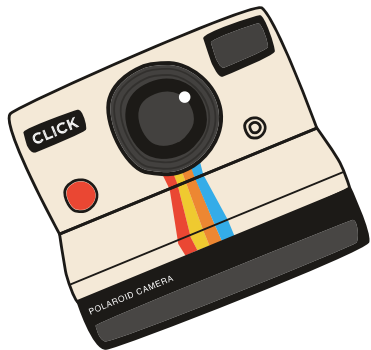
**OCT 19-23 – MON – FRI – 7 A.M. TO 7 P.M.**

**OCT 24 – SAT 7 A.M. TO 7 P.M.**

**OCT 26-30 – MON – FRI – 7 A.M. TO 7 P.M.**

**ELECTION DAY TUESDAY, NOV 3,  
7 A.M. TO 7 P.M. VOTE AT YOUR ASSIGNED  
PRECINCT**





# PHOTOS FROM PAST EVENTS



**Never miss out on City of Valdosta events. If you don't see an event your department is hosting, contact the Public Information Office at 229-671-3615**





# **OPEN ENROLLMENT IS COMING SOON!**

**Your Open Enrollment Window is from**

**11/16/20 – 11/30/20**

**YOUR ENROLLMENT IS ACTIVE THIS YEAR.  
THIS MEANS EVERYONE MUST LOG INTO  
EMPLOYEE NAVIGATOR TO MAKE OR  
WAIVE ELECTIONS FOR 2021.**

**BE ON THE LOOK OUT FOR MORE  
INFORMATION REGARDING EMPLOYEE  
NAVIGATOR.**

Contact Human Resources for more information.



# Don't forget to **Fall Back**



Daylight Savings is on Sunday,  
November 1. Don't forget to set your  
clocks back 1 hour.

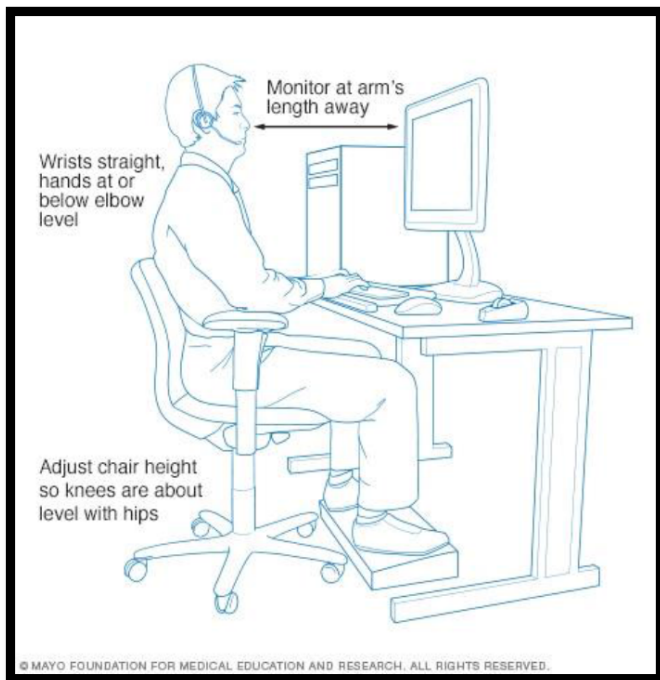


# Office Ergonomics: Your How-to Guide

**A comfortable work space can help you feel your best. Give your sitting work area a makeover with this visual guide to office ergonomics.**

Proper office ergonomics — including correct chair height, adequate equipment spacing and good desk posture — can help you and your joints stay comfortable at work.

Ready to give your work space a makeover? Get started making your sitting workstation comfortable with this visual guide to sitting workstation ergonomics.



## **Chair**

Choose a chair that supports your spinal curves. Adjust the height of your chair so that your feet rest flat on the floor or on a footrest and your thighs are parallel to the floor. Adjust armrests so your arms gently rest on them with your shoulders relaxed.

## **Key objects**

Keep key objects — such as your telephone, stapler or printed materials — close to your body to minimize reaching. Stand up to reach anything that can't be comfortably reached while sitting.

## **Keyboard and mouse**

Place your mouse within easy reach and on the same surface as your keyboard. While typing or using your mouse, keep your wrists straight, your upper arms close to your body,

and your hands at or slightly below the level of your elbows. Use keyboard shortcuts to reduce extended mouse use. If possible, adjust the sensitivity of the mouse so you can use a light touch to operate it. Alternate the hand you use to operate the mouse by moving the mouse to the other side of your keyboard.

## **Telephone**

If you frequently talk on the phone and type or write at the same time, place your phone on speaker or use a headset rather than cradling the phone between your head and neck.

## **Footrest**

If your chair is too high for you to rest your feet flat on the floor — or the height of your desk requires you to raise the height of your chair — use a footrest. If a footrest is not available, try using a small stool or a stack of sturdy books instead.

## **Desk**

Under the desk, make sure there's clearance for your knees, thighs and feet. If the desk is too low and can't be adjusted, place sturdy boards or blocks under the desk legs. If the desk is too high and can't be adjusted, raise your chair. Use a footrest to support your feet as needed. If your desk has a hard edge, pad the edge or use a wrist rest. Don't store items under your desk.

## **Monitor**

Place the monitor directly in front of you, about an arm's length away. The top of the screen should be at or slightly below eye level. The monitor should be directly behind your keyboard. If you wear bifocals, lower the monitor an additional 1 to 2 inches for more comfortable viewing. Place your monitor so

# TEN SAFETY ITEMS EVERY HOME NEEDS

*It's Fall, the kids are back at school, and now is a great time to make sure you have taken all precautions to keep your family - and home - safe. Here are ten essential safety items that the City of Valdosta Safety Committee recommends every home have in order to be prepared for any and all disasters.*

**1. Fire Ladder.** If there are any bedrooms on the third floor, make sure they are equipped with a fire ladder that everybody knows how to use.

**2. Evacuation Plan.** Speaking of a fire ladder, it is imperative that you have an evacuation or emergency plan that is reviewed with, and understood by, all family members should you need to leave the house in a hurry due to fire or any other natural disasters. Put it in writing and practice!

**3. Smoke Detectors.** And make sure they work! Every home should have one smoke detector on each floor in addition to one outside each bedroom. Change the batteries each fall and spring when you change the clocks back for daylight savings. Test them monthly to ensure that they are in working order, and after ten years, they should all be replaced to make sure that they will function properly in case of a fire.

**4. Carbon Monoxide Detectors.** Much like the fire detectors, these should be installed outside each bedroom. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that can be very dangerous, which makes these detectors extremely valuable in protecting your family's health and safety.

**5. Fire Extinguishers.** Your house should have one in the kitchen to put out any cooking catastrophes, one on the second floor or in the master bedroom, one near any fireplaces, and preferably one in your car. Every member of the family should know how to use one, and make sure you check that they function correctly each year and replace when expired.

**6. Outlet Covers.** Keep unused electrical outlets covered with safety covers – not just to protect any kids that are in the house, but to protect everyone from accidental electrical shock.

**7. First Aid Kit.** Have a first aid kit on hand – hopefully you'll never need to use it! You can buy a pre-assembled kit or make your own. Make sure you have the following items on hand, and periodically check everything and replace what has expired:

- First aid manual
- Band aids
- Hydrogen Peroxide
- Antiseptic
- Antibiotic ointment
- Benadryl
- Saline drops
- Cotton balls and swabs
- Thermometer
- Ibuprofen
- Latex gloves
- Ace bandage
- Scissors
- Safety pins
- Needles (for splinters)

**8. Flashlights.** Make sure everyone has a flash light next to their bed in the event of a power outage. Stash an extra supply of batteries so you don't run out.

**9. Emergency Phone Numbers.** This list should be clearly posted for anyone in your home and should include cell phone numbers of family members, neighbors' numbers, 911, doctors'/pediatricians' numbers, and poison control.

**10. A Safe.** This may sound crazy, but a safe not only protects important papers and valuables from burglary, but also from fire and water, should anything happen to your home. Don't think you have anything valuable? The deed to your house, birth certificates, marriage certificates, vehicle titles, family photos, etc. would all be difficult to replace!

CITY OF VALDOSTA CARES ABOUT YOU!  
CITY OF VALDOSTA SAFETY COMMITTEE

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# Self-Care Strategies for Healthy Mental and Physical Health

*Self-care strategies are good for your mental and physical health and can help you take charge of your life. Take care of your body and your mind and connect with others to benefit your mental health.*

## TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY

*Be mindful about your physical health:*

- **Get enough sleep.** Go to bed and get up at the same times each day. Stick close to your typical schedule, even if you're staying at home.
- **Participate in regular physical activity.** Regular physical activity and exercise can help reduce anxiety and improve mood. Find an activity that includes movement, such as dance or exercise apps. Get outside in an area that makes it easy to maintain distance from people, such as a nature trail or your own backyard.
- **Eat healthy. Choose a well-balanced diet.** Avoid loading up on junk food and refined sugar. Limit caffeine as it can aggravate stress and anxiety.
- **Avoid tobacco, alcohol and drugs.** If you smoke tobacco or if you vape, you're already at higher risk of lung disease. Because COVID-19 affects the lungs, your risk increases even more. Using alcohol to try to cope can make matters worse and reduce your coping skills. Avoid taking drugs to cope, unless your doctor prescribed medications for you.
- **Limit screen time.** Turn off electronic devices for some time each day, including 30 minutes before bedtime. Make a conscious effort to spend less time in front of a screen — television, tablet, computer and phone.
- **Relax and recharge.** Set aside time for yourself. Even a few minutes of quiet time can be refreshing and help to quiet your mind and reduce anxiety. Many people benefit from practices such as deep breathing, tai chi, yoga or meditation. Soak in a bubble bath, listen to music, or read or listen to a book — whatever helps you relax. Select a technique that works for you and practice it regularly.

## TAKE CARE OF YOUR MIND

*Reduce stress triggers:*

- **Keep your regular routine.** Maintaining a regular schedule is important to your mental health. In addition to sticking to a regular bedtime routine, keep consistent times for meals, bathing and getting dressed, work or study schedules, and exercise. Also set aside time for activities you enjoy. This predictability can make you feel more in control.
- **Limit exposure to news media.** Constant news about COVID-19 from all types of media can heighten fears about the disease. Limit social media that may expose you to rumors and false information. Also limit reading, hearing or watching other news, but keep up to date on national and local recommendations. Look for reliable sources, such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
- **Stay busy.** A distraction can get you away from the cycle of negative thoughts that feed anxiety and depression. Enjoy hobbies that you can do at home, identify a new project or clean out that closet you promised you'd get to. Doing something positive to manage anxiety is a healthy coping strategy.
- **Focus on positive thoughts.** Choose to focus on the positive things in your life, instead of dwelling on how bad you feel. Consider starting each day by listing things you are thankful for. Maintain a sense of hope, work to accept changes as they occur and try to keep problems in perspective.
- **Use your moral compass or spiritual life for support.** If you draw strength from a belief system, it can bring you comfort during difficult times.
- **Set priorities.** Don't become overwhelmed by creating a life-changing list of things to achieve while you're home. Set reasonable goals each day and outline steps you can take to reach those goals. Give yourself credit for every step in the right direction, no matter how small.

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CITY OF VALDOSTA SAFETY COMMITTEE

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# Human Resources Director Message

## Being Thankful

We give thanks for the love of our family and friends and for the joy of life's gifts. Thanksgiving is such a wonderful holiday – one without the pressure of giving gifts. In so many ways, it is a time for real reflection and appreciation.

This year, we can all be thankful for the love of our family and friends, our health and if we have meaningful work too, what a bonus. So put the electronics down, even if for a minute, and enjoy it. This Thanksgiving, I hope you'll toast family and friends and give thanks for all the good things that occurred this year despite it being year of the unknowns for so many.

Thank you,  
Catherine Ammons  
Director of Human Resources & Risk Management

# WHO'S WHO IN HR?

**YOUR GO-TO TEAM "Who do I call for...?" It can be confusing to determine who in HR to call with your specific questions.  
Use the information below to point you in the right direction.**

## **Catherine Ammons**

Director of Human Resources  
cammons@valdostacity.com  
(229) 259-3544 ext. 4745



- EEO Claims, lawsuits, related issues
- Employee grievances and appeals
  - Position management, workflow, reorganization
  - Policy interpretation/challenges
  - Any issue, problem, or question for which you are unable to get a timely answer
- Sick Leave Donation
  - Staff handbook updates/changes

## **Ryien Bonner**

Human Resources Coordinator  
rbonner@valdostacity.com  
(229) 259-3544 ext. 4318



- Employment Verification
- Employment On-boarding
  - Training
- Job Postings
- I-9 Verifications

## **Berna Hepburn**

Human Resources Specialist  
bhepburn@valdostacity.com  
(229) 259-3544 ext. 4746



- Worker's Compensation claims
- Property insurance
- FMLA

## **Amanda Hendricks**

Sr. Human Resources Manager  
ahendricks@valdostacity.com  
(229) 259-3544 ext. 4747



- Payroll
- Health Benefits
- Unemployment benefits
- Retirement point of contact