Edition #40 July 2025

>>> NEWSLETTER <<<

ALLIANCE FOR COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT



A NOTE FROM THE NEW NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

>>> READ MORE (P.2)

Our new Neighborhood Program Administrator, Karely Chavez, is excited to connect with A.C.E. communities and support your great work. Read her full welcome message on page 2!

READ MORE (P.3) <<<

Join us on Friday, July 4 from 5–9:30 PM for live music, food trucks, vendors, a free KidsZone, and a fireworks show to cap off the night! Full event details on page 4.

JOIN US FOR 4TH OF JULY FIREWORKS

UPCOMING EVENTS

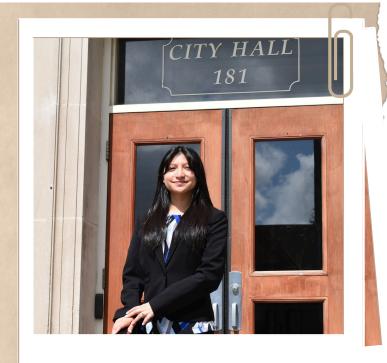
>>> READ MORE (P.6)

Summer fun is in full swing with great activities at the Gaston County Public Library and Schiele Museum! From family-friendly programs to educational exhibits, there's something for everyone.

A NOTE FROM YOUR NEW NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

Dear A.C.E. Communities,

My name is Karely Chavez, and I'm excited to introduce myself as your new Neighborhood Program Administrator. I'll be putting together and sending out the ACE newsletter each month, and I look forward to using it as a tool to keep you informed, connected, and inspired by all the great work happening across our city.



While I'm still getting settled into my role, one thing is already clear—our neighborhoods are full of energy, creativity, and community pride. I'm genuinely looking forward to getting to know each of you, learning about your unique goals and projects, and finding ways to support the great things you're doing. Please feel free to reach out anytime with updates, questions, or just to say hello. I'm here to help, and I can't wait to see what we'll accomplish together.

Warmly,

Karely Chavez
Neighborhood Program Administrator
karely.Chavez@gastonianc.gov





Fourth of July Celebration

July 4, 2025 5:00 PM - 9:30 PM Downtown Gastonia

Vendor Marketplace - Food Trucks Social District - Live Music - Contests Free Entertainment and Rides - Fireworks





COME OUT TO DOWNTOWN GASTONIA ON FRIDAY, JULY 4 FROM 5:00 PM - 9:30 PM! THERE WILL BE FOOD TRUCKS, A BEER GARDEN, VENDORS, ENTERTAINMENT, A FREE KIDSZONE AND FIREWORKS WILL BEGIN AROUND 9:30 PM.

THERE WILL BE LIVE MUSIC FROM 5:00 PM - 9:30 PM. A LOCAL MUSICIAN WILL PLAY FROM 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM, AND THE EMERALD EMPIRE BAND WILL PLAY THROUGHOUT THE REMAINDER OF THE EVENT. PRE-RECORDED PATRIOTIC MUSIC WILL PLAY DURING THE FIREWORKS.

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN LAWN CHAIR AND/OR BLANKET TO SIT AND ENJOY THE MUSIC

THANK YOU TO CAROMONT HEALTH, ALCHEMY COWORKING AND WANDERING CUP FOR SPONSORING THE FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION!



DID YOU KNOW?

4

Gastonia just hit 85,000+ residents!

we're growing **fast,** reaching new **milestones** & planning for the **future!**

How does Gastonia plan for growth?

We are currently updating the Comprehensive Plan - a roadmap that helps guide development and growth in the city for the next 25 years.

We want to hear from you! If you missed one of our Public Workshops in 2024 or 2025, check out our website to view workshop recaps, survey results, vision statement and more!

Stay tuned for final draft public comment starting in July, 2025 - available online.

LEARN MORE online or scan the QR code: https://www.gastonianc.gov/gastonia2050









MANY PEOPLE DON'T REALIZE THAT STORM DRAINS ARE NOT CONNECTED TO WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS. INSTEAD, THE WATER—AND ANYTHING IT CARRIES LIKE LITTER, OIL, OR CHEMICALS—FLOWS DIRECTLY INTO NEARBY STREAMS, RIVERS, AND EVENTUALLY INTO LARGER BODIES LIKE OCEANS. THAT'S WHY EFFORTS LIKE STORM DRAIN MARKING ARE SO IMPORTANT. THEY SERVE AS SIMPLE YET POWERFUL REMINDERS TO THE PUBLIC THAT "ONLY RAIN SHOULD GO DOWN THE DRAIN."

HUGE KUDOS TO THE LAUREL EAST NEIGHBORHOOD (A.C.E. RECONGIZED NEIGHBORHOOD) WHO TEAMED UP WITH KEEP GASTONIA BEAUTIFUL/STORMWATER UTILITIES FOR THEIR WORK DURING THE GREAT AMERICAN CLEANUP. INSTALLING 23 STORM DRAIN MARKERS IS A BIG DEAL—WHAT AN AMAZING WAY TO FOSTER ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AND COMMUNITY PRIDE!



Gastonia Goes Global



It's that exciting time of year when Gastonia's Sister Cities Ambassadors are off exploring the world! High school students from our program traveled to visit our sister cities in Germany and Peru. They had amazing experiences staying with host families and learning about different cultures.

Gastonia has had a sister city relationship with Gotha, Germany for almost 36 years and with Santiago de Surco, Peru for 21 years. Over the years, we've sent not only students but also local leaders, firefighters, and other service workers to build friendships and learn from each other.

Students are chosen to participate through an application and interview process. We give priority to those who are willing to host visiting students and who show they care about helping others and making the world a better place—either through classes, clubs, or community service.

This year's trips included visits to famous and meaningful places—like Machu Picchu in Peru and the Buchenwald concentration camp in Germany. Students explored museums, churches, big cities, small towns, markets, and tried lots of new foods and drinks. They also went to school with their host brothers or sisters. While some things—like doing laundry, cooking, or taking showers—were a little different than at home, the students learned that feeling safe, full, and cared for is the same everywhere in the world.

We're looking forward to welcoming our sister city friends to Gastonia soon. We can't wait to share the best of our town and show them the same kindness they gave our students. Sister Cities International was started in 1956 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The goal was to build peace through person-to-person connections. Today, Sister Cities continues to grow friendships around the world through business, education, the arts, and community programs. It's all about celebrating diversity and building a stronger world together.



UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE SCHIELE MUSEUM



CELEBRATE INDEPENDENCE DAY WITH A BANG!

DON'T MISS "FIREWORKS IN SPACE" – AN INTERACTIVE PROGRAM FOR ALL AGES – PRESENTED AT 11 AM, 12 PM, AND 1 PM.

EXPLORE THE HISTORY OF FIREWORKS AS AN INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION, DISCOVER THE INNER WORKINGS OF A FIREWORK, AND GAZE AT SOME OF THE MOST EXTREME "FIREWORKS" IN THE COSMOS! INCLUDED WITH THE PURCHASE OF MUSEUM ADMISSION. ARRIVE EARLY TO SECURE YOUR SEATS!



SATURDAY, JULY 19, 10 AM - 4 PM

WEATHER IS GETTING EXTREME. DISCOVER THE POWER OF HURRICANES, TORNADOES, TYPHOONS, AND MORE!

LEARN HOW METEOROLOGISTS FORECAST EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS, GET HANDS-ON WITH THE INSTRUMENTS THEY USE, AND EXPLORE WILD WEATHER OF ALL KINDS.

GET DETAILS AT HTTPS://WWW.SCHIELEMUSEUM.ORG/SCHIELE-NEWS/WEATHER-PROOF/
YOUR TICKET INCLUDES AN EXCLUSIVE PLANETARIUM PRESENTATION: "WEATHER ON OTHER PLANETS".

WANT TO KNOW HOW YOUR CITY WORKS?

JOIN THE MUNICIPAL CITIZENS' ACADEMY!

A behind-the-scenes experience of your local government. Open to Gastonia residents ready to learn, connect, and make a difference.

What You'll Experience:

- · Learn how your city runs
- · Meet city staff & leaders
- · Behind-the-scenes city tours
- · Discover how to get involved

When:

- January June 2026
- · 2 Mondays a month
- 6:00 8:00 PM

<u>APPLY TODAY!</u>



Questions?

Contact Karely Chavez Karely.Chavez@gastonianc.gov (704)-866-6907

https://www.gastonianc.gov/ municipal-citizens-academy





SAVE THE DATE! 2025 GASTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SUMMER READING PROGRAM

FREE FUN FOR ALL AGES ALL SUMMER LONG!

Join the 2025 Gaston County Public Library's Summer Reading Program for reading, events and prizes.

Beginning May 27th, visit any of our 10 library locations to pick up a free reading record (for littles and elementary grades), a bingo card (for teens in grades 6–12), or a reading/adventure card (for adults) or register online and then track your reading and activities at home.

Why Participate?

- Read what you want, when you want, where you want!
- Enjoy FREE library events for all ages!
- Earn cool prizes by completing your reading record, and automatically be entered to win more by attending library events!



www.gastonlibrary.org









with the African American Museum of History and Culture and Gaston County Public Library

Come explore the Aunt Charlotte McClee Community Garden!

Unearth the fascinating history of Gaston County, learn about the legacy of Aunt Charlotte McClee, and discover the beauty of the community garden.

Tuesday, July 29, 2025 10:00 -12:00

Aunt Charlotte McClee
Community Garden

604 N. York Street, Gastonia

READY, SET, GROW

A COMMUNITY BACK TO SCHOOL EVENT

Saturday, August 2, 2025

















11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

EASTRIDGE MALL - 2ND FLOOR

URBAN STATION, 246 N NEW HOPE RD, GASTONIA, NC 28054

READY? SET? GROW! GET READY TO GROW INTO THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP ENSURE STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE READY TO THRIVE IN THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR.

THERE IS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AT THIS EVENT, FROM KINDERGARTEN TO 12TH, FROM AFTER-SCHOOL CARE TO HOMESCHOOLING RESOURCES, YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY AND RECEIVE ACCESS TO BACK-TO-SCHOOL SERVICES.