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CONTACT:  
Kelly Carmichael  
(770) 467-4750

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## **SPALDING COUNTY PARKS, PUBLIC GROUNDS AND LEISURE SERVICES PROGRAMS AND VOLUNTEERS EARN DISTRICT HONORS!**

On October 17, 2018 the Georgia Recreation and Park Association District Four held its annual Awards Banquet in Carrollton and presented Spalding County staff and volunteers with special recognition.

Volunteers, Tommy and T.J. McDaniel, received the “Athletic Volunteer of the Year” award for their years of dedicated service to youth baseball. Tommy McDaniel began as a volunteer coach in 1976 and his son T.J. began in 1982. Combined they have devoted 78 years of service to Spalding County youth. Throughout the years the McDaniels have worn many hats including those of coaching, program managers and association leaders. They have not only invested time in creating the thriving recreation baseball program we have, but they have worked to promote the Wyomia Tyus Park Baseball complex as a quality tournament facility currently hosting up to 15 tournaments per year and bringing thousands of guests into Spalding County. These two volunteers eat, sleep, and breath baseball. Their incentive and priority has always been to build and sustain a quality recreation program focused on player development, organized by a fiscally responsible organization. They exemplify excellence in volunteerism in the local community and statewide and personify the community spirit of Spalding County.

Fairmont Community Center received the Program Award in recognition of their summer program called “Summer Pops.” The dynamic staff of Supervisor Torein Simon, Winnie Colbert, Sonny Walker and Markeda Crawford planned an innovative and exciting summer of activities for local youth who would otherwise have nothing to do. Grants received from the National Recreation and Park Association and the Georgia Recreation and Park Association provided funding to purchase sports equipment, programming materials, oversized and bigger than life recreation games to compliment the “Playing in My Big Back Yard” programming and much more. The main theme for it all was “Healthy out of School Time.” To further support programming, vital community partnerships were developed with the Griffin Spalding School System for healthy meals, The Spalding County Extension office for evidenced based nutrition classes and the Healthy Living Community Garden for practical learning experiences on how fresh foods taste and grow!

The Spalding County Senior Center received recognition for “A Holiday Extravaganza” as Outstanding Special Event of the Year! Center Supervisor, Lauren Brown and Nutrition Program Supervisor, Jacoya Clinkscales coordinated with community partners to create an extra special holiday experience. On December 13, holiday cheer

spread throughout Spalding County as the Senior Center presented “A Holiday Extravaganza” to its members and Meals on Wheel Clients. Charitable and in-kind contributions from Brighmoor Hospice, Caremaster Medical Services, Corner Café, Food Depot, Spalding Corrections and more made this festive event possible. The Nutrition Program delivered 90 festive fruit baskets and winter care packages to Meals on Wheels recipients. Later in the day, the Center held its first Ugly Sweater Christmas Party with an intriguing harp guitarist performance, Ugly Sweater competition and catered lunch. Each of the 150 participants received a gift of a fruit basket. It was an afternoon of laughter and good cheer and to everyone’s delight the Ugliest sweater award was presented to two ladies who fit into ONE SWEATER!

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