



Pinnacle

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Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

Executive Director's Report



- ◆ We are preparing for our Annual Staff Retreat and Staff Photo Day. Thanks to Peggy Lovell and Heather Feldman for putting this together.
- ◆ Great job by our Youth Division in Workforce Development this summer. Jessica Williams and her staff are to be complimented for their extra efforts. We are indeed making a difference in our youth participants.
- ◆ Our local Farmer's Markets are going full speed ahead this year. It seems they keep improving the quantity and quality of our food-to-tables in our region. We are blessed in our region with some wonderful soils, climate, and knowledgeable individuals (farmers or otherwise).
- ◆ Although the GMRC region did not pass the T-SPLOST a while back, three of our regions in the middle of the state did. The Georgia Association of Regional Commissions Chairman Terrell Hudson stated at the last GARC meeting that "T-SPLOST is the greatest thing that ever happened to rural Georgia (where it was successfully passed)". We will have another chance in 2016 or 2017 if we so choose to vote it in. Having traveled in Middle and South Georgia recently, that area looks like the "orange barrel capital of the nation". Road projects are popping up all over that part of the state.
- ◆ Best wishes to **Baldwin** Fire Chief, Joe Roy, as he is recovering from being struck by a vehicle during a boot drive fund-raiser on July 25th. He was airlifted to Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta after being struck by a vehicle near Cornelia. (*per The Northeast Georgian newspaper*)
- ◆ Kudos to Diana Eddins-Wiggin for representing the GMRC by speaking at the **Hartwell** Kiwanis Club meeting last week. Thanks to Bill Chafin for allowing a number of our staff to address this crowd of **Hartwell** leaders throughout the year.
- ◆ John Phillips is learning more each day, about the new WIOA changes for the WIA program. He has been reviewing the 700 page manual and attended numerous meetings where they have explained the differences and changes. Many of these changes have been discussed with me, Mike Berg (CLEO Chairman), and our Attorney Kevin Tallant. We want to make sure that we are doing everything by the book. We will be fully changed to WIOA by 2016.
- ◆ Remember that our office space contract for the Workforce Development offices will expire the end of 2016. We will begin working on this and finding the best location to change to, if needed, well in advance of December 31, 2016.
- ◆ Welcome to Bill Schmid who has taken the position as the new City Manager in **Dahlonega**. Welcome him at bschmid@dahlonega-ga.gov
- ◆ The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission's Managers met in **Helen** City Hall on August 24th. Thank you to Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) for sponsoring the event.
- ◆ GMRC receives three 2015 NADO Innovation Awards!
 - King's Hawaiian Expansion Project—Nancy Smallwood
 - GMRC Aerial Photography/LiDAR Consortium Project—Faith Bryan
 - Training 2 Work Offender Job Training Program—Diana Eddins-Wiggin

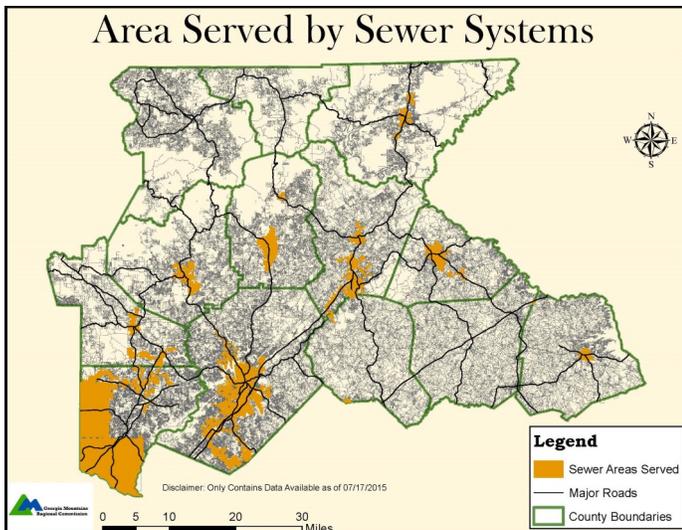
Workforce Development

- ◆ The Workforce Development Youth Department had 38 participants across the Georgia Mountains region, complete the Summer Work Program. Youth were given hands on experience in a worksite learning work skills including time management, following directions, how to dress on the job, attitude and many other soft skills. Five youth participants were hired at their worksite.
- ◆ The Youth Department hosted a Career Pathways trip for five participants. The trip included a tour of the King’s Hawaiian production facility, which exposed the participants to many employment opportunities available in the manufacturing sector, from entry level, computer/IT specialists to management and more. Sandwiches for lunch were donated by Chick-fil-A. Lunch was followed by a tour of Lanier Technical College. The participants were able to see different programs offered at Lanier Tech and visited some of the classrooms.

Planning Services

- ◆ **Forsyth County** has submitted the annual update of their *Capital Improvements Element (CIE)* for review.
- ◆ The GMRC has completed the draft *Fire Services Assessment* for **Lumpkin County**.
- ◆ The **City of Baldwin** has submitted the draft update of their *Comprehensive Plan* for review.
- ◆ The **GMRC** is developing a *map and inventory of sewer lines* throughout the region to aid in future environmental assessments. Currently the dataset represents approximately 80% of the region’s properties.
- ◆ The **City of Hartwell** has asked the GMRC to assist in creating a *development impacts matrix* – A tool for weighing the costs and benefits of proposed development.

Area Served by Sewer Systems



Mobile Training Units

- ◆ The Career Coach team was asked to conduct an interview skills training session for clients of the **Dahlonega** Day Reporting Center. Angela Pugh, life skills mentor for the youth department, conducted the training session aboard the Career Coach. Time for job searches, job applications, and WIOA information was offered as well, and it was a wonderful success!
- ◆ Beginning in July 2015, WIOA applicants attending overview sessions at the Regional Commission office have been able to board the Career Coaches and receive assistance completing their application. Shortcuts have been set up on the Coach’s computers, streamlining the information gathering component of the WIOA application.
- ◆ Continuing our established partnerships in the community, the Career Coaches recently conducted specialized resume training sessions for accountability court, probation office, and Salvation Army programs in **Dawson, Habersham, Hall, and Stephens** Counties.

Category of Responses:	Month Total	Year Total
Total Job Searches	77	502
Total Job App	25	334
Total Resumes	38	466
Total Interviews	5	9
Total Interest Survey	18	249
Total Training Sessions	4	29
Total Testing	0	31
Total Typing Assessments	0	11
Total GMRC Info	51	479
Total Unemployment Claims	0	0
Computer Trainings	0	0
Microsoft Office Classes	0	0
GED assistance		
TOTAL REPSONSES	218	2110

RESPONSES PER COUNTY

Banks - 0	Lumpkin - 6
Dawson - 1	Rabun - 0
Forsyth - 24	Stephens - 16
Franklin - 17	Towns - 13
Habersham - 17	Union - 18
Hall - 74	White - 23
Hart - 4	Other - 25

Economic Development

- ◆ On behalf of the **Gainesville Hall '96** Roundtable, Inc., an application for \$300,000 in Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant funding was submitted to ARC for improvements to the Lake Lanier Olympic Venue.
- ◆ Economic Development staff is currently working on 12 Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) pre-applications for FY2016 funding
- ◆ The Annual Update to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is available for public review. The CEDS Annual Update is also a consolidated effort with the GMRC's Regional Plan. Please contact Heather Feldman at 770-538-2610 if you are interested in reviewing the document or visit the GMRC website at: www.gmrc.ga.gov. A huge THANK YOU to all of the 2015 CEDS Committee Members for your input into the 2015 Annual Update!!! We appreciate your commitment to this effort.
- ◆ The **City of Cornelia** was awarded \$500,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for sewer improvements. This is the 5th award for the city in 6 years - CONGRATS to the **City of Cornelia**. Patrick Larson prepared and submitted the application on behalf of the city.
- ◆ **City of Lavonia** receives \$185,875 in FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant funding.

Success Story



I just wanted to say that the WIA program is exceptional to those who truly desire to further their education. Josette Jeanis was very nice to me and led me in the right direction in choosing to pursue my career in obtaining my CDL-A license. At first, I didn't think that I would get a job after completion of the program due to me being a convicted felon. I was

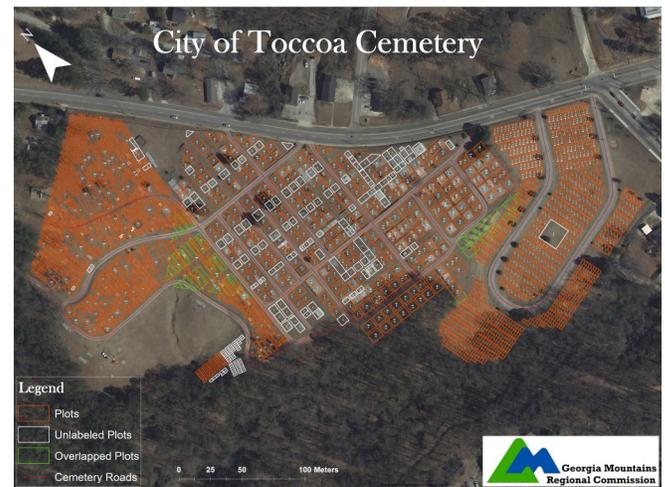
thinking to myself that nobody would hire me because I was a felon. Josette Jeanis let me know that it could be done if I really wanted to choose the CDL career, so I went along with her advice. Now, I have a Class CDL-A and a job that started on July 27, 2015 with Watkins Shepard in Conover, North Carolina. After my two week orientation, my home will be in Dalton, Georgia.

I would like to give a special thanks to Josette Jeanis for giving me the encouragement to accomplish my goal in obtaining my class CDL-A and for having a job lined up upon my completion of the program. This program really works if you work it and keep a positive attitude.

Sincerely,
Randell Bonner

Information Services

- ◆ During the Geographic Information Systems Coordinating Committee (GISCC) meeting held this month, Susan Miller, Georgia Geographic Information Officer (GIO), was introduced. Ms. Miller gave a presentation regarding her background and future goals for the State of Georgia. GMRC staff plan to invite Ms. Miller to our office to discuss the current and future GIS projects for the region.
- ◆ The **Towns County** parcel project is in heavy production mode. Conversion is complete, 2010 parcel changes are complete and software and 2010 datasets have been delivered and downloaded to county tax assessors computers.
- ◆ Approximately one third of the **Toccoa** Cemetery project field work is complete. GMRC recently upgraded our GPS equipment that includes a built-in camera and range finder. These features have made our field work a much smoother and faster process.



- ◆ GMRC staff met with the **City of Maysville** regarding creating maps and databases for the city owned and operated Sunrise Cemetery.
- ◆ The **City of Hartwell** has requested the GMRC staff to provide a quotation for Water, Sewer and Gas mapping.
- ◆ As of August 14, 2015, Quantum Spatial reports the completion of 100% of the overall LiDAR processing and 73% of the overall Orthoimagery processing. GMRC Staff have received the LiDAR datasets for the City of Atlanta and Bartow County for review. Upon completion of our review, the data will be released to the City and County for QA/QC. The imagery datasets will start shipping out by the end of August.

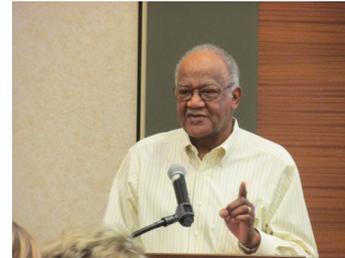


OFFICES CLOSED

Monday, September 7th, 2015
in Observance of Labor Day

GMRC Council Meeting

July 2015—Forsyth County



Employee Spotlight



Jessica Williams began her work as a Case Manager in 2010 with Department of Labor and the Regional Commission in October 2011. Jessica is now the Supervisor for the Workforce Development Youth Department. Prior to joining Workforce Development, Jessica worked as the Executive Director for the Salvation Army. She holds a Bachelor's in Psychology and an Associate's of Theology from Ashford University. She is currently pursuing her Masters degree. Jessica and her husband, Chad reside in Flowery Branch with their two children, Brandon and Katie. Jessica and her family are very involved in their church, 12 Stone, where Jessica sings in the choir. They are also a very active family participating in all sports but especially volleyball and baseball.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	TIME	EVENT/MEETING	LOCATION
August 27	5:30 pm 6:00 pm	GMRC Executive Committee GMRC Council Meeting	City of Hartwell—Teasley House
September 24	5:00 pm 6:00 pm	GMRC Executive Committee GMRC Council Meeting	White County—Location TBA
October 29	3:30 pm 5:00 pm 6:00 pm	GMRC WD Board Meeting GMRC Executive Committee GMRC Council Meeting	Lumpkin County/City of Dahlonega—Smith House