



## Pinnacle

1310 W. Ridge Rd.  
P.O. Box 1720  
Gainesville, GA. 30503  
(770) 538-2626  
[www.gmrc.ga.gov](http://www.gmrc.ga.gov)  
Editor: Marissa Smith

## Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

### Executive Director's Report



- ◆ Audits and more audits. The Workforce Department was audited the first week in January, by the Georgia Economic Development Department Audit team. They are the most fair and easiest team we work with annually. Our financials were so clear, they only did a performance audit this year. Thanks to all the staff who were prepared for their arrival, as they came the first Monday after the new year.
- ◆ Our staff members hit the ground running the first of January. I like that our folks might take a little R&R time to be with the family around Christmas, but are off to a running start the first day they return to the office after their break.
- ◆ If you did not get one of our 2014-15 Annual Reports the first of January, let us know and we will have some available at our next Council Meeting.
- ◆ Let's hope for a successful state Legislative Session this year. Talk to your legislators about your needs throughout the session.
- ◆ Congrats to our own Annie Sutton, GMRC Council Member from **Cleveland**. On November 16th at the District 2 Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) Fall Meeting in **Cornelia**, Annie was recognized by GMA Executive Director Lamar Norton with the prestigious Certificate of Distinction from the Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute. To receive a Certificate of Distinction a city official must complete a minimum of 204 units of credit, including at least 72 hours from the required list, the Newly Elected Officials Institute, and the Robert E. Knox, Jr. Municipal Leadership Institute. Annie works at Ingles in **Cleveland**, serves on **Cleveland** City Council, and is active on the GMRC Council.
- ◆ Best wishes to David Headley (formerly with **Dawson County** and previously on the GMRC Board). Who was recently named as **Dawsonville's** City Manager. David, his wife Sandy, and two beautiful daughters are very active in the **Dawson County** area.
- ◆ Tate O'Rourke, with University of North Georgia's Economic Development Department was just recognized as *North Atlanta Business Post's* "40 under 40". Way to go Tate!
- ◆ In case you missed the Annual Meeting, awards presented this year were as follows:  
Employee of the Year – Patrick Larson  
Council Member of the Year – Bill Chafin  
Elected Official of the Year – Sonny James  
Appointed Official of the Year – Deborah Mack  
Chairman's Award Recipient – Heather Feldman
- ◆ The 2016 Annual Meeting/Awards Dinner will be on Friday, December 2, 2016 at the Dillard House. Mark your calendars and save the date!
- ◆ The first 2016 GMRC City/County Managers meeting will be hosted by the **City of Dawsonville** on February 24<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am. Please RSVP to Marissa Smith at 770-538-2626 or [msmith@gmrc.ga.gov](mailto:msmith@gmrc.ga.gov).
- ◆ Let us know if we can manage your city or county retreat this year. Call me at 770-538-2606 or Adam Hazell at 770-538-2617 to arrange schedules. Thanks to those who have already made plans for us to do your retreat.

## Economic Development

- ◆ Congrats to the **City of Toccoa** and **Stephens County** who were jointly awarded \$200,000 in OneGeorgia Authority Grant funding for sewer improvements.
- ◆ On behalf of the following communities, the projects listed below were submitted to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources for Recreational Trails Grant Funding:

**City of Dawsonville** – City Park Trail

**City of Lula** – Rafe Banks Park Trail

**City of Toccoa** – The Links at Lake Toccoa Trail System

- ◆ FEMA – Assistance to Firefighters Grants Submitted

**Banks County**

**Franklin County** (3)

Bold Springs Volunteer Fire Department

Sandy Cross Volunteer Fire Department

EMS

**City of Cornelia**

**City of Lavonia**

**City of Royston**

**City of Toccoa**

## Employee Spotlight



Diana Eddins-Wiggin started work with the GMRC in October 2011 as the Adult/Dislocated Worker Supervisor. She worked as a case manager for the GA DOL with the WIA program for two years before joining the GMRC. Diana has a

Bachelor's in Social Work from the University of New Hampshire. She also proudly served as an aircraft mechanic in the Air Force for five years, thank you Diana for your service. When not at work Diana spends time with her two sons, David and Jakob. Her youngest son Jakob is a Senior at West Hall High School, where Diana serves as Treasurer for the Band.

## Information Services

- ◆ It's that time of year again, Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS) Mapping for the US Census Bureau. If your Municipality or County needs assistance with this process, please give us a call at 770-538-2614.
- ◆ GMRC staff have recently completed an update to the **City of Lavonia** Burgess Memorial Cemetery Map. Field work continues to progress on the **Oakwood** and **Toccoa** Cemetery projects.
- ◆ Save the Date! On February 11<sup>th</sup>, Jeannine Hightower with Navigation Electronics will present the latest in Trimble GPS technology at the GMRC office in the J.B. Jones Training Room. More details coming soon.
- ◆ The final report for the 2015 GMRC Aerial Photography/LiDAR Project has been prepared by Quantum Spatial. If you are interested in reviewing this document, it is available on the GMRC website at [http://www.gmrc.ga.gov/GIS\\_Projects.htm](http://www.gmrc.ga.gov/GIS_Projects.htm)

## Photo Contest

- ◆ Submit photos of your city or county for a chance to be featured on the GMRC Christmas Card for 2016! Beautiful scenery, snow days, local buildings, and festivals are just a few suggestions of what type of photos to submit. These will also be featured at our Annual Meeting in Dillard. Please email submissions to Marissa Smith at [msmith@gmrc.ga.gov](mailto:msmith@gmrc.ga.gov).
- ◆ Thank you to **Banks County** for the photos submitted below!

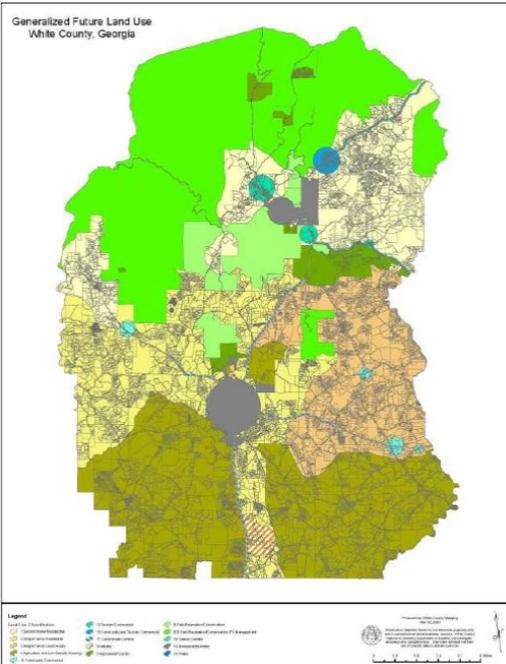


### Workforce Development

- ◆ Staff lead work skills, character building and future planning workshops for more than 130 youth in **Lumpkin County, Hall County, White County** and **Banks County**.
- ◆ In the Youth Department, there were six college graduates and six GED graduates.
- ◆ North Georgia Technical College, Goodwill of North Georgia and Georgia Mountains Workforce Development are providing occupational skills training to 9 women from Arrendale Transition Center in **Alto**. The 12 week training includes welding, soft skills and a paid internship.

### Planning Services

- ◆ **Dawson County** has had their annual Capital Improvements Element (CIE) update approved by the Dept. of Community Affairs (DCA).
- ◆ The following communities have formally begun their latest full Comprehensive Plan update process – **Forsyth County, Hall County, Towns County (joint), Lumpkin County, Dahlonega and Clermont**.
- ◆ The **City of Baldwin** has adopted their Comprehensive Plan update.
- ◆ GMRC staff are providing ongoing historic preservation assistance for the **City of Toccoa**, aiding property owners in their restoration efforts of a local hotel, motel and soon a local airport facility.
- ◆ **White County** is updating their Solid Waste Management Strategy.



### Career Coach

- ◆ The Career Coach hosted WIOA Overviews and Resume Sessions for the Colwell Probation Detention Center in **Union County** and for the **Toccoa** Probation Office in **Stephens County**.
- ◆ Workforce Development personnel and the Career Coach team partnered with Goodwill to fast-track the welding training applications of seven Lee Arrendale State Prison inmates.
- ◆ The Career Coach Team assisted a total of 1,893 people in 2015. This is 232 more than were assisted during all of 2014, resulting in an annual increase of 14%!
- ◆ The Career Coach Team was busy providing resume instruction in 2015 as well. The team created and/or reviewed 702 resumes, which is 157 more than in 2014, an annual increase of 29%!
- ◆ Individuals conducting exploratory career surveys for 2015 totaled 301 people. This is 147 more than in 2014, resulting in a 95% increase over last year!
- ◆ More people inquired of WIOA services than ever before. A total of 841 people inquired about WIOA services, 57 more than last year, resulting in an annual increase of 7%!

Category of Responses:	Month Total	2014 Total	2015 Total
Total Job Searches	55	982	958
Total Job App	15	784	517
Total Resumes	31	546	703
Total Interviews	1	21	55
Total Interest Survey	15	154	301
Total Training Sessions	0	101	31
Total Testing	0	7	32
Total Typing Assessments	1	2	14
Total GMRC Info	60	784	841
Unemployment Claims	0	99	0
GED Assistance	0	5	0

Total People for December: 83  
 Persons for 2015: 1893  
 Average per Month for 2015: 157

Persons for 2014: 1661  
 Average per Month for 2014: 138

# GMRC ANNUAL DINNER



## UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	TIME	EVENT/MEETING	LOCATION
January 28	3:30 pm 5:00 pm 6:00 pm	WD Board Meeting GMRC Executive Meeting GMRC Council Meeting	Stephens County/City of Toccoa at Gate Cottage-Toccoa Falls College
February 11	TBA	Trimble GPS Training	GMRC Office-J.B. Jones Training Room
February 24	10:00 am	City/County Manager Meeting	Dawsonville City Hall
February 25	5:00 pm 6:00 pm	GMRC Executive Meeting GMRC Council Meeting	Habersham EMC Building
March 31	5:00 pm 6:00 pm	GMRC Executive Meeting GMRC Council Meeting	Franklin County/City of Lavonia
April 28	3:30 pm 5:00 pm 6:00 pm	WD Board Meeting GMRC Executive Meeting GMRC Council Meeting	Banks County/City of Homer