



Pinnacle

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Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

Executive Director's Report



♦ For me and my family, the countdown continues until my retirement on August 9, 2016. This has been a great pleasure to serve in the capacity of Executive Director and the other opportunities it has given me over the past 11+ years. As I complete my 43rd year in local and regional management I stop to think, have I and my staff members made a difference in each location. The answer is a resounding "yes". I served for 17 years with Cobb County, 15 years with the City of Douglas, and four years with Newnan. But my favorite location is the current position as Executive Director of the GMRC. We have a cover sheet over our Sign In sheet at both offices that simply asks the question, "Have I made a difference in my region today?" I want our folks to see this everyday to

remember who we serve and that we are here to make a difference. I have had excellent Council members, excellent staff, and 51 local governments who are looking for our assistance. It has been a great "ride" and I appreciate this opportunity. Now onto Greenville, SC for the next chapter.

- ♦ We are seeking more grant funding from Washington and Atlanta this year and I and the Economic Development team just returned from our annual meeting at Lanier Islands. We are proud to have listened to numerous outstanding speakers like Commissioner Black (Department of Agriculture), Deputy Commissioner Christopher Nunn (DCA), Annaka Woodruff (State ARC Program Manager), Phil Paradise, Lee Mertins and Jonathan Corso (EDA/Atlanta Regional Office), and many more. Heather Feldman just finished her term as Chairman of the ED Professionals in the state. She did an outstanding job for all 12 regions in the state.
- ♦ Congrats to Marissa and Craig Smith as they have announced they are expecting a little girl in October. Soon-to-be big brother Corbin is excited about his new baby sister. Hope all goes well for the Smith family. God bless the family and the new little one, Madalyn.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	TIME	EVENT/MEETING	LOCATION
May 26	5:00 pm 6:00 pm	GMRC Executive Committee GMRC Legislative Appreciation Dinner	Dawson County Dawson County Middle School
June 30	5:00 pm 6:00 pm	GMRC Executive Committee GMRC Council Meeting	City of Sky Valley/Rabun County
July 28	5:00 pm 6:00 pm	GMRC Executive Committee GMRC Council Meeting	City of Blairsville/Union County
August 2	4pm-7pm	Retirement Reception for Danny Lewis	Gainesville Civic Center
August 15	————	ARC Pre Applications Due	Contact Heather Feldman
August 25	5:00 pm 6:00 pm	GMRC Executive Committee GMRC Council Meeting	Forsyth County

Economic Development

- ◆ The **Stephens County** Development Authority received \$400,000 in OneGeorgia EDGE funding to facilitate the location of a new manufacturing facility (Nifco KTW) in **Stephens County**. At a total private investment of \$27 million, approximately 200 jobs will be created.
- ◆ The **Gainesville-Hall County** Development Authority received \$1,750,000 in Regional Economic Business Assistance (REBA) grant funding to facilitate the expansion of a manufacturing facility for Kubota Manufacturing of America. The project will result in approximately 580 new jobs and \$220 million in private investment.
- ◆ **ARC Pre-Application Deadline – August 15, 2016**
The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) will be accepting Pre-Applications until close of business on **August 15, 2016**. ARC can provide matching funds for infrastructure, asset-based development/tourism initiatives, education, and training projects in the Georgia Mountains Region. Funding is aimed at helping communities devise and implement long-term economic redevelopment strategies through both construction and non-construction projects. All projects must, at a minimum meet one of the following ARC Goal Areas:
Economic Opportunities
Ready Workforce
Critical Infrastructure
Natural and Cultural Assets
Leadership and Community Capacity
- ◆ Economic Development Staff recently attended the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC) Economic Development Conference at Lake Lanier. Training topics included: Downtown Development, Brownfields, Tax Incentives/Credits, EDA Planning and CEDS Development, as well as Public Private Partnerships (P3).

Employee Spotlight



Sonia Zavala is a new addition to our Workforce Development Youth Department. She comes to us from AVITA and prior to that she attended the University of Georgia. Sonia holds a BS in Biology, and is also is a member of Lambda Theta Alpha Sorority, Inc. and the Hispanic Students Association. Sonia was born in Orange, California but moved to **Gainesville** in 1997. She is of Mexican descent and brings to the GMRC her excellent bi-lingual skills. In her free time she enjoys outdoor activities such as hiking, fishing and jet skiing. She also loves to dance and spending time with family and friends.

Information Services

- ◆ **City of Homer** has requested assistance with updating the Official Zoning Map
- ◆ **Banks County** Health Department has requested mapping services to identify watersheds in the county
- ◆ Now that the digital parcels are complete for **Towns County**, we are re-evaluating the Zoning Map for the **City of Young Harris**
- ◆ Faith Bryan attended the 2016 Southeast ESRI User Conference in Charlotte, North Carolina. GMRC received praises during a presentation given by Bridgett Lawlor with Bartow County regarding the imagery received through the Aerial Photography/LiDAR project. There were representatives from **Habersham, Forsyth, and Hall Counties** attending the conference as well. The social event was held at StrikeCity and the Georgia attendees formed our bowling team named "Georgia Rocks!" which correlated with our score being at rock bottom. Team members were from Middle Georgia RC, River Valley RC, Georgia DCA, Southern RC, Sumter County, GMRC, and the Georgia GIO.
- ◆ GMRC staff has been requested to assist the **Town of Alto** with creating a Zoning Map
- ◆ **City of Lavonia** has requested mapping assistance with a Points of Interest Map for visitors to the area.



Success Story



I really wanted to further my education but I did not have enough money for school. While researching the Welding Diploma program at North Georgia Technical College, the school told me about WIOA financial Aid assistance.

The welding program at NGTC was an amazing experience and I would love to go back for more education. The WIOA financial aid helped me in so many ways, I am beyond grateful!

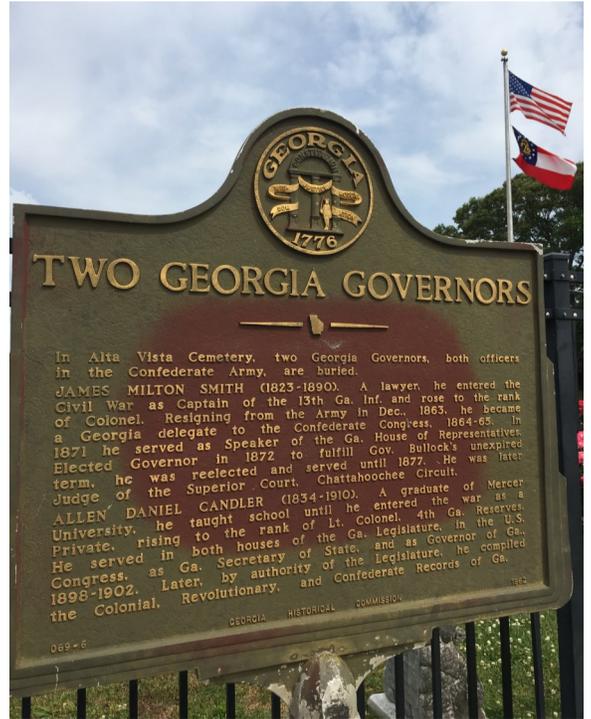
I am working now as a welder and I am debt free. I am extremely thankful for the help with my welding training and supply costs. WIOA is very supportive and helped me in many ways. They were able to take so much of the financial stress off of me. WIOA was a huge help in my success!

Keven Mayfield

Around the Region



Sunset at Lake Hartwell



Alta Vista Cemetery—Gainesville, GA



Sky Valley, GA



The Links at Lake Toccoa