Pinnacle
Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

May 2022

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Save the Date:
Calendar of Upcoming Meetings and Trainings

Cover Photo
Edge of the World Trail
Dawson County, GA
Courtesy of GMRC Archives
• I would like to welcome our new city administrators in the region – Ms. Trudy Crunkleton is the new City Manager for the City of Clayton and Kevin Harris is the new City Administrator for the City of Cleveland. We look forward to meeting both and working with them in their new roles. Welcome!

• The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission is pleased to announce that we have received an Environmental Protection Agency Assessment Grant under the Brownfields Program. GMRC will be using funding to assess brownfields throughout the GMRC region. We are excited about this program and the benefit it will have on our region. Congrats to Adam Hazell for his work on this application!

• May is National Historic Preservation month. Earlier this month, Joe Rothwell led a Historic Preservation Roundtable discussion for the region outlining programs and tools available when protecting historic resources. In addition to discussing current preservation issues, the group also shared best practices from across the region. Great job Joe!

• The GMRC was proud to be the host Regional Commission for this year’s Georgia Association of Regional Commissions Economic Development Conference at Lake Lanier Islands. This was the first GARC conference in three years! Topics for this year’s conference included Workforce Development, Housing, CEDS best practices, and marketing for Regional Commissions and as always, great collaboration and networking with colleagues around the state!!

• Kudos to Nona Turk who received her certification from the Carl Vinson Institute of Government for completing the Governmental Accounting Series Training! Nona has received her certification for introduction to Governmental Accounting I and II as well as intermediate Governmental Accounting. I appreciate Nona’s hard work towards meeting this goal!

• I recently had the opportunity to present at the Southeast Regional Director’s Institute Annual Conference in Annapolis, MD. It was a great opportunity to be among my peers and learning more about topics affecting Executive Director’s and Regional Councils.

• The GMRC held its first public input meeting on the Transit Development plan on May 11th. It was a great opportunity to hear from the public regarding transit throughout Region 2.

• Thank you to Jack Stanek, Director of Community Programs—Rural Development for Georgia for USDA for presenting at this month’s council meeting. Mr. Stanek gave a great presentation on programs and services offered through USDA and how the Georgia office can help.

Sincerely,

Heather Feldman
Executive Director
Economic Development

- Congratulations to the City of Hartwell on being awarded a Community HOME Investment Program (CHIP) grant in the amount of $400,000 to assist with owner occupied housing rehab in the City’s Rome and Richardson Neighborhoods.

- On behalf of the City of Dawsonville, an Appalachian Regional Commission grant in the amount of $70,000 was submitted to assist with the development of a downtown strategic plan.

Revolving Loan Fund:

- GMRC closed on two (2) loans in May totaling over $410,000. These low interest, fixed rate loans are assisting small businesses in the region! For more information on this program, visit: https://www.gmrc.ga.gov/rlf or call our department at (770) 538-2610.

- The Georgia Mountains Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee recently met via Zoom to update key goals for the 5-year rewrite. These goals include: Natural and Cultural Resources, Land Use, Community Facilities and Services, Economic Development, Business and Industry, Workforce Development, and Housing. You too can have input in this document. Stay tuned for the public comment period coming late summer.

Planning

Regional Brownfield Assessment is a Go!

The GMRC, in conjunction with consulting firm Terracon, has been awarded $500,000 for brownfield mitigation in the region. The majority of funding will go towards Terracon to conduct assessments of nominated properties to confirm the extent of contamination and create formal mitigation strategies for each. The GMRC will also receive some funding both to administer the grant and to develop a regional brownfield overview, helping to identify an extent of brownfield issues across the region and work with local communities and landowners to prioritize future rounds of clean up efforts. By having these assessments done, property owners will be eligible for federal funds to assist with cleaning and mitigation, bringing more properties safely back onto the market for reuse.

The project will formally kickoff in FY23 and run for three years. GMRC communities will be eligible to nominate individual properties for assessments during this cycle, at which time the GMRC will make an announcement about the nomination process.
• During May, WorkSource staff attended community meetings in Banks, Dawson, Hall, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, and White Counties reaching over 175 community partners and agencies. Staff also attended the United Way- One Hall Financial Stability Committee Meeting and a Community Resiliency Model-Training through Wellroot Family Services.

• WorkSource sponsored one full day of the Be Pro Be Proud events at High Schools in Lumpkin, Franklin, and Stephens Counties where over 600 students were introduced to technical professions within the medical, manufacturing, transportation, utility, and construction industries. At the event, students experienced and gained knowledge of technical careers that are engaging, challenging, and financially rewarding without the need for a four-year degree. Students were able to access information on the types of education needed, where to find the training, and how to identify local job opportunities. More information about this event can be found at www.beprobeproud.org.

• Welding bootcamps for transitioning offenders will be starting with Hall County Institution and Lanier Technical College-Hall and a second will start with Lee Arrendale Correction Institute-Habersham. WorkSource is also kicking off several fast track bootcamps for graduating seniors in Forsyth, Lumpkin, and Hall Counties. Applications are still being taken for the Electro-mechanical Refrigeration Academy at Lanier Technical College. Please contact Catherine Allen for more information or to apply 770.538.2732 or calcen@gmrc.ga.gov.

• FX Logistics, based in Hall County, has filled two positions using WIOA On-the-Job Training Funds to offset the training costs of their new employees. Funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis through Business Services. Employers interested in partnering with WorkSource Georgia Mountains for Internships or On-the-Job Training or that need Incumbent Worker Training, should contact Niki McPherson at 770.538.2734 or nmcpherson@gmrc.ga.gov. More information can be found at www.gmrc.ga.gov/employers.

• Youth staff attended signing day at Gainesville High School which highlighted students that had committed to plans after high school. Six students were committed to completing boot camps with WorkSource Georgia Mountains.

• WorkSource staff attended Project Search Graduation where former youth participant Will Crain was the Keynote Speaker and 1 graduate will be transitioning to college with WorkSource Georgia Mountains.

• WorkSource presented overview sessions at Banks County Family Connections & TCSG Youth Sub-Committee Meetings

• Congrats to our students! Their hard work has paid off with four GED completions and three College Completions!
2022 Housing Webinar Series

A second regional webinar will be held on June 8th, 2022. DaTonya Lewis and Glenn Misner will be giving a presentation on DCA’s Housing Development Finance Resources. There is no cost to participate, but pre-registration is required. Please click here to register.

Please feel free to share this information with any local officials that may be interested.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Events Around the Region</th>
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<td><strong>Clayton Farmers Market Reopening!</strong></td>
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| April 2 - October 1, 2022  
9a.m.-12p.m. Saturdays only |
| **Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds—Towns County** |
| **Happy Together Tour** – June 4, 2022  
Greater Atlanta British Motorcycle Association – June 24 & 25, 2022 |
| Visit the website below for more info and ticket prices!  
[Georgiamountainfairgrounds.com](http://Georgiamountainfairgrounds.com) |
| **Toccoa Summer Nights** |
| **Ida Cox Music Festival**  
Live music, food, drinks, and more!  
Historic Downtown Toccoa  
Every Saturday in June through August—7 p.m.—10 p.m.  
[www.mainstreettoccoa.com](http://www.mainstreettoccoa.com) |
| **2022 Summer Movie Series**  
Every Thursday in June  
Historic Ritz Theatre  
139 Doyle Street  
Toccoa, GA 30577  
[www.ritztheatretoccoa.com](http://www.ritztheatretoccoa.com) |
| **Pickin’ In the Park and Car Show** |
| 639 Main Street  
Clermont, GA 30527  
Car Show 3p.m.-7p.m. and Live Music from 7p.m.—9 p.m.  
- June 11, 2022  
- Aug 6, 2022 |
| **Clayton Gravel Grinding** |
| Saturday, June 18, 2022  
8 a.m.—5 p.m.  
Location Start in Clayton.  
109 N. Main Street  
Clayton, GA 30525  
(407) 256 7971  
[Clayton Gravel Grinding Online Registration (bikereg.com)](http://bikereg.com) |
| **Made in Georgia Festival 2022** |
| Saturday, June 25, 2022—10 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Sunday June 26, 2022—11 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Admission $7 adults, 14 & under free  
Over 75 Vendors offering varieties of products made, grown, brewed, harvested, stitched, crafted, or inspired by Georgia.  
Towns County Recreation & Conference Center  
150 Foster Park Rd.  
Young Harris, GA 30582 |
| **Concert on the Hiawassee Square** |
| Saturday, June 25, 2022  
6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.  
Free Admission! Pets are welcome on a leash with clean-up materials!  
City of Hiawassee Square  
Towns County, GA  
(Rain Venue—Civic Center)  
(706) 994 1247 |
| **First Friday Fest in Clayton** |
| First Fridays of the Month in June through October 2022  
Live concerts, food, and vendors.  
Rock House on Main Street  
Clayton, GA 30525  
(706) 982 1284 |
| **First Friday in Gainesville** |
| Friday, June 3, 2022  
Every first Friday from June through September.  
Starts at 6 p.m.—Bring your lawn chairs and picnic blankets!  
Historic Gainesville Square  
301 Main Street  
Gainesville, GA 30501  
Follow our Facebook page for more info! |
GMRC STAFF SPOTLIGHT!

Dan Thornton, Sr. Adult/Dislocated Worker Case Manager

Dan is GMRC’s Sr. Adult/Dislocated Worker Case Manager and Business Services Project Manager. He has been with Workforce Development for 16 years. His main concentration is in developing our budding Business Services program which includes On-The-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, Apprenticeships, and Internships. He also continues to assist adult and dislocated workers with WIOA marketable skills training and Rapid Response partner services as well as follow-up case management responsibilities.

Dan has lived in many places throughout the country. He was born in a suburb of Fort Worth, Texas. During his childhood, he would sit on his roof and watch movies from the Drive-In across the street. Living in Texas, he received his first cowboy boots and cap pistols when he was only 3 years old. His family later moved to Minnesota where he attended school through the 12th grade. Dan lettered in football, tennis, and choir. He moved to Tampa following his graduation for college where he received a scholarship for a Legal Assisting Degree. He was in the Tampa Bay Oratorio Choir and won 2nd place at the Tampa Bay Round Robin Tennis Tournament during his time there. He was also a member of the “Rare and Tropical Fruit Club” in Tampa where they propagate and develop commercial farming for tropical and rare fruits. From Tampa, he moved to Orlando where he met his wife, Mary of 29 years and counting. After living in Florida for 27 years, Mary and Dan, along with their two miniature Schnauzers, moved to Lula, Georgia to take advantage of the four seasons and the beautiful Appalachian foothills, something Florida could not offer.

While living in this new chapter of his and his wife’s life, Dan continues his love of singing and has been involved in numerous choirs, Gospel quartets, and even big bands. He also is a lover of history and science and in his spare time enjoys creative writing.

Dan, we appreciate your commitment to GMRC wish for many more to come!

UPCOMING GMRC COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

⇒ June 30, 2022  City of Hiawassee / iParametrics Disaster Resilience Plan
⇒ July 28, 2022*  Rabun County
⇒ August 25, 2022  Habersham County

GMRC Council Meetings begin at 6:00 PM; Executive Committee meets prior at 5:00 PM.
*WD Board Meeting at 4:00 PM