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REGIONAL CALENDAR

January

- => 17 Martin L. King, Jr. Holiday
- => 19 JLUS, RC
- => 20 Lanier Retreat
- => 21 Wellness Kickoff, RC
- => 22-24 GMA Mayors Day, Atlanta
- => 25 Council Mtg., Pearson
- => 31-Feb. 1 ACCG, Atlanta

February

- => 2 Okefenokee Occasion, Atlanta
- => 9 Regional Plan Mtg., RC
- => 16 Valdosta/Lowndes Bird Supper, Atlanta
- => 17 Planning/Zoning Training, Valdosta



in the REGION

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Christmas Project 2010

During November and December, staff members of the Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC) participated in a project to donate Christmas gifts to needy seniors in the region. The project, which began in 2009, provided needy seniors a Christmas they won't soon forget.

Senior center site managers were asked to submit names of seniors in their areas who lived alone or with no family support to help them. Each senior selected supplied a "wish list" for staff members to consult when purchasing items. A few requested robes and pajamas, some requested socks and slippers, and one said she would be excited to receive anything at all.

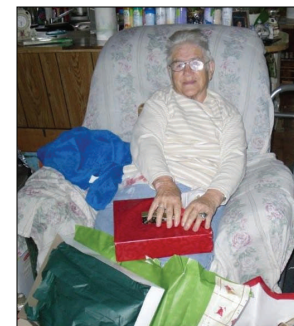


Glenda Lang, AAA Program Manager (left), and Katrina Beebe, VISTA Volunteer with the AAA (right) assisted with the distribution of gifts.

In addition to items such as food, pajamas, blankets and towels, staff members also collected basic necessities including cleaning supplies, antibacterial wipes and toiletries. As one site manager explained, "Although many people may not think of a toothbrush or baby powder as a Christmas gift, there are many people, especially seniors, who have little to no access to basic items that you and I might take for granted. Older adults living in poverty or alone with no one to assist them greatly need and appreciate these items."

Through the generosity shown by SGRC staff members, these special seniors saw their Christmas wishes come true. In return, staff received the heart-warming feeling of spreading the true spirit of Christmas.

Seniors from Brantley and Charlton Counties Receiving Christmas Gifts



Brantley County Seniors

Charlton County Seniors



327 W. Savannah Avenue
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

1725 S. Georgia Pkwy, West
Waycross, Georgia 31503

Area Agency On Aging

Contact: Wanda Taft

SGRC AAA Gateway/ADRC Heads Effort To Reach Most Vulnerable Medicare Beneficiaries



Southern Georgia Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Gateway/Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) and GeorgiaCares Program staff are working to ensure that the most hard-to-reach seniors in the region are made

aware of their Medicare benefits.

According to Laura Sapp, Gateway/ADRC Supervisor, "Many older adults living in rural areas may be unfamiliar with Medicare. They may also be unsure about or unable to apply for the benefits they deserve. In response, we are reaching out to the most rural areas within our region to inform and educate older adults about these benefits."

Through the MIPPA (Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act) Grant provided by the Administration on Aging (AoA) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the AAA is providing enrollment information sessions to individuals likely to be eligible for the Low-Income Subsidy Program (LIS), the Medicare Savings Program (MSP), and the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Program.

Also, because recent legislation allows Medicare coverage for many types of preventative screenings with no out-of-pocket costs, staff will utilize a portion of the MIPPA Grant funding to inform Medicare beneficiaries and health care providers of the changes in coverage. Preventative health screenings and services that no longer require out-of-pocket costs include screenings for breast, cervical, colorectal, and prostate cancer; diabetes screenings; HIV screenings; cardiovascular screenings; diabetes self-management training; glaucoma tests; smoking cessation counseling; and flu shots.

The availability of preventative health screenings is of vital importance to seniors as early detection can prevent complications and prolong or save lives. As an example, the Medicare Diabetes Screening Project estimates that 3 out of 4 Americans over 65 are either diabetic or pre-diabetic. Access to blood sugar screenings can lead to early detection of diabetes, potentially preventing complications such as blindness, cardiovascular disease, and nerve damage. Increased awareness and utilization of the Medicare covered preventative screenings are critical to older adults' health and quality of life

Community and Economic Development

Contact: Sherry Davidson

JLUS Implementation Phase

In May of 2009 the Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC) and Moody Air Force Base (MAFB) completed the MAFB Joint Land Use Study (JLUS). The study resulted in a series of recommendations and strategies that will promote compatible community growth while supporting military training and operational missions well into the future. Currently, the SGRC and MAFB are working together to start implementation of several of the recommendations with \$162,000 in funding received from the U.S. Department of Defense, Office of Economic Adjustment in October 2010.

This implementation phase will take several recommendations from the JLUS and execute them to institute compatible civilian land use activities and development patterns that protect and preserve the utility and operational effectiveness of the installation. Implementation of the recommendations will result in several products, including the development of an ordinance for noise attenuation standards for construction, and a Long Range Land Use Compatibility Study that will work to protect and preserve the utility of the installation for the nation's defense.

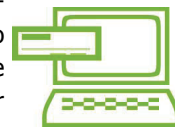
The Implementation Committee for this second phase of the Moody AFB JLUS has been formed, comprised primarily of elected officials from within the study area (Berrien, Clinch, Echols, Lanier, and Lowndes), and MAFB Representatives. The kickoff meeting for the Implementation Committee was held on Wednesday, January 19, 2011, at the SGRC offices at 327 West Savannah Avenue in Valdosta.

Information Technology

Contact: Vance Roberts

Employees Offered Direct Deposit Payroll Options

The Cities of Quitman, Ashburn and Fitzgerald will offer the option of direct deposit for employee's payroll checks beginning in January. The employees will be able to direct their pay into multiple accounts in multiple banks. The system will allow them to deposit either by percentage of their pay or by a specified amount into each account. Replacing their checks will be "deposit advices" that give the employee all of the same information that was on their check stub including the deposit amount and year-to-date deductions.



Geographical Information System

Contact: Chris Strom

Geographical Information Systems Projects In Review



Looking back on the past year, there have been quite a few GIS projects that our staff, local governments, and other customers can be proud of. Here's a list of just a few of them that were initiated in 2010:

- **City of Valdosta Sunset Cemetery** Mapping and public website
- **2010 Census mapping** participation was completed for our region
- **City of Adel Mosquito Control** web mapping application
- **City of Blackshear Utility** Mapping and website creation (underway)
- **City of Alma Utility** Mapping and website creation (underway)
- **City of Ocilla Utility** mapping and website
- **Parcel Digitization for Atkinson County** (underway)
- **Coffee County 911** mapping support
- **Turner County 911** mapping support
- **Lowndes County Sheriff's Patrol** in car mapping application
- **Regional Well and Septic Tank** Mapping project expansion to assist UGA Marine Extension
- **Valdosta-Lowndes Industrial Authority Site Selection** and analysis
- **GIS Training to over 75 GIS users**
- **Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission** GIS support services
- **Thomas County GIS Advancements** and publication of their first-ever public and interdepartmental web based GIS tools
- **Cities of Seminole and McLoud, Oklahoma** mapping support for comprehensive planning
- **Regional Transportation Analysis** and mapping support

From the list above, you can see the diversity of the applications of GIS and our staff's expertise. If you would like to explore how GIS could help your community, please give us a call.

We've enjoyed and are very proud of our partnerships with you, our customers. We also look forward to having another great year of delivering GIS successes.

Loan Services

Contact: Michelle Frey

Loan Department Welcomes New Staff Member



Wesley (Skip) W. Long, Jr., became the newest member of the Loan Program staff on January 3. His position is that of Loan Officer. He is replacing Richard Welch who left the SGRC in November when he accepted the position of Business Service Officer with BB&T in Valdosta.

Skip comes to the Regional Commission from Edward Jones where he was a Financial Advisor. He graduated from Valdosta State University in 2003 with a degree in Business Administration and holds Series 7 and Series 66 licenses. He is also a licensed Life & Health Insurance Agent.

Skip's duties will include marketing the Small Business Administration and Revolving Loan Fund Loan programs, establishing relationships with lenders in the 18-county area, and packaging and servicing commercial loans.

Skip and his wife, Hollie, have a son, Eli, born this past Thanksgiving.

Workforce Investment

Contact: Marcia Gaskins

Cindy Eblin Retires

Cindy Eblin retired in December 2010 after 12 years of services to the Southern Georgia Regional Commission in the Workforce Development Division. Cindy was the Director of Workforce Development in the Waycross Office. Cindy was given a surprise retirement party on December 17, 2010, for her many years of service given



to the SGRC. Friends and family members gathered at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission office in Waycross to honor Cindy's notable career at the SGRC. Cindy now resides in Florida.

Congratulations Cindy !!