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**REGIONAL CALENDAR**

- October**
- ⇒ 18 Legislative Appreciation Dinner, Adel
  - ⇒ 25 ACCG District Mtg., Valdosta
  - ⇒ 26 Georgia Transit Day, Waycross
  - ⇒ 31 MPO-TSPLOST, RC
- November**
- ⇒ 2 Wellness kickoff, RC
  - ⇒ 6 End Daylight Savings
  - ⇒ 9-11 GARC Training, St. Simons
  - ⇒ 16 Aging Advisory, Nashville
  - ⇒ 24-25 Thanksgiving Holidays



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A leader in the development of local and regional programs since 1963.

**OVER \$5.4 MILLION IN CDBG FUNDS AWARDED TO TWELVE SOUTH GEORGIA COMMUNITIES**

On August 26<sup>th</sup>, Governor Nathan Deal announced over \$38.8 million in grant awards to 70 Georgia communities. These grant awards were from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the state's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

Over \$5.4 million in CDBG funds were awarded to local governments in the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's region. The CDBG monies were granted to Berrien, Brantley, Coffee, Cook, Lanier, Pierce, and Tift counties and the cities of Ashburn, Homeland, Homerville, Nashville, and Ocilla.

The Southern Georgia RC's Community Development Division prepared ten of the twelve approved CDBG applications in this region. The following is a description of the awards in South Georgia:

- City of Ashburn - \$493,427 – Multi Infrastructure Improvements
- Berrien County - \$382,441 – Drainage and Streets Improvements
- Brantley County - \$467,179 – Mental Health Center
- Coffee County - \$500,000 – Drainage and Streets Improvements
- Cook County - \$432,643 – Drainage and Streets Improvements
- City of Homeland - \$415,211 – Drainage and Streets Improvements
- City of Homerville - \$494,074 – Sewer Improvements

- Lanier County - \$460,622 – Drainage and Streets Improvements
- City of Nashville - \$386,905 – Sewer Improvements
- City of Ocilla - \$457,382 – Sewer Improvements
- Pierce County - \$500,000 – Head Start Facility
- Tift County - \$500,000 – Drainage and Streets Improvements

The CDBG grant program is administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and focuses on improving living conditions and economic opportunities in cities and counties throughout the state.



Seen above is one of the streets that will be improved with CDBG funds in Echols County. Upon completion of the project, residents will no longer be endangered by these flooded roads.



327 W. Savannah Avenue  
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

1725 S. Georgia Pkwy, West  
Waycross, Georgia 31503

Area Agency On Aging  
Contact: Wanda Taft

## Medicare Enrollment Dates Have Changed



Linda Gail, AAA GeorgiaCares Coordinator

Each year, Medicare holds an open enrollment period during which beneficiaries can change their health or prescription drug coverage. In the past, the Medicare annual open enrollment period was November 15 through December 31; however, these dates have recently changed.

According to Linda Gail, GeorgiaCares Coordinator with the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's Area Agency on Aging (AAA), "The Medicare enrollment period now begins on October

15 and runs through December 7. It is very important that Medicare beneficiaries make any plan changes during this new enrollment period. Changes will be effective as of January 1, 2012."

Linda also suggests comparing plans early. "Once the enrollment period opens, take advantage of doing comparisons as soon as possible. Do not wait until the last minute. Take a close look at your choice of plans now so that you'll be sure to pick the one that's best for you. When comparing Part D plans, there are a few things to consider: make sure that the plan is affordable for you, your medications are covered by the plan, your pharmacy accepts your plan and the co-pays are within your budget."

For more information about Medicare and programs that help to pay Medicare premiums, contact Linda Gail, AAA GeorgiaCares Coordinator, at 1-866-55AGING (1-866-552-4464). Or visit the GeorgiaCares Web site at [www.mygeorgiacares.org](http://www.mygeorgiacares.org).

## Transportation Sales Tax Meetings A Success

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Regional Transportation Roundtable jointly hosted a series of public meetings in September for the proposed transportation sales tax. Public meetings were held in Waycross, Valdosta and Fitzgerald where more than 60 citizens, business owners and elected officials came to

comment and learn about the proposed regional transportation sales tax. The project listing and maps are available on the SGRC website at [www.sgrc.us/transportation](http://www.sgrc.us/transportation). Comments were accepted until the next meeting of the Regional Transportation Roundtable that was held on October 10<sup>th</sup> in Douglas. If you have questions or comments on the proposed transportation sales tax please contact Corey Hull at 229-333-5277 or at [chull@sgrc.us](mailto:chull@sgrc.us).

Loan Services  
Contact: Michelle Frey

## SGRC Loan Program Hosts Lenders Training Workshop

The SGRC loan department sponsored an SBA Lenders Training Workshop on Tuesday, September 20 at the SGRC office in Valdosta. Attendance at the event was excellent with standing room only in the conference room. Twenty-nine Community Bankers and members of SGRC Loan Board attended from all over the South Georgia area.



(l-r) George Hoag, Vianna Harrison and Ray Gibeau

Presenters included Skip Long of the SGRC, George Hoag and Vianna Harrison of the SBA Georgia District Office, Ray Gibeau of the Office of International Trade and Ruby Riesinger and Marty LeFiles of the VSU Small Business Development Center.

The topics covered were the SBA 504 Loan Program, SBA's new web site and "Tool Kit", How to Process the Standard 7a Loan Request, SBA Loan Servicing and Liquidation, Export Loans and SBDC Programs. The Loan Program staff had the opportunity to share how the SGRC can assist small businesses in starting or expanding their business through not only the SBA loan program but our Revolving Loan Fund as well.

Michelle Frey, Loan Program Director, said, "We are extremely pleased with the level of interest in our programs exhibited by the excellent turn-out. There will definitely be more workshops like this in the future."

Geographical Information System  
Contact: Chris Strom

## The pen is mightier than the sword ~~mouse~~

Here's the latest addition to the list of things that many of us will say "it's about time someone came up with that!". **It's a digital pen.** That's right- You write, it saves. And what's more, *it can create* GIS data as fast as you can say G-I-S.

Many of you are well aware that the integration of data into a GIS hasn't always been a quick one. There was digitizing, GPS, attribute assignment, projections and tons of other technical jargon that just added up to you wishing you had never asked. While all of that still has to happen, it's been made a lot faster and easier. What's more, this technology takes the data capture itself out of a GIS technician's hands and puts it into yours. With this pen technology, your next GIS layer can be a breeze to build.

Here's how it works—You tell us what data you would like to capture. From there, decide whether you would like to draw it on a map, or write it on a paper form, or both.

From there, we print your maps and/or forms for you. Then you take them and write all over them using the digital pen. *Every stroke of the pen is recorded.* Every fire hydrant, every address point, every house, every tree, every everything! And if you discover there's notes you need to make in the field about something that's not on your map legend, just jot it down and the pen saves that too! Once you're done, you can keep the paper copies with all your markups, we don't need them. Just return the pen to us. From there, we will download the contents and turn it into a GIS layer for you. It really is that simple. We know, it's hard to believe. But it's true.

In the past, there've been times when it would have been nice to create GIS data just as a matter of inventory for future reference, but it just wasn't worth the time investment. With this pen, practically anything you would write down in the course of your project anyway, can be integrated into GIS and it doesn't take any special training. If you can work a ballpoint pen, you can work a digital pen.

This pen has already been used in our region for bike route inventories, disaster assessment, and utility inventories. Upcoming are "windshield" land use and housing surveys, more utility inventories and a few more. If you would like to see or hear more about how this tool can help you, please give us a shout. We're happy to demonstrate and work with you to get the ball (point pen) rolling.

## AAA Staff Members Receive Industry Recognition

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is proud to announce that two of its employees recently received recognition for outstanding contributions to the Aging industry.



Bridget Delaney, AAA Assistant Director of Aging Services, was recently honored with a Certificate of Merit at the Georgia Gerontology Society (GGS) Conference held in Athens.

Pam Rogers (left) President of the Georgia Gerontology, presents Bridget Delaney with a Certificate of Merit for outstanding service in the Aging Field.

Bridget was recognized at the conference by her peers for her exemplary efforts as the AAA's Wellness Coordinator for 3 1/2 years. She is a wife and mother of two children, works full-time and still always found time for the site managers who depended on her.

"I enjoy working with older adults," commented Bridget. "It's a good feeling to know that I'm making a difference in

other peoples' lives, and I hope to always have the opportunity to do so."

Linda Gail, AAA GeorgiaCares Coordinator, was also recently honored with a Recognition of Achievement for fulfilling the GeorgiaCares State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) local performance benchmarking goals for FY2011.



Linda Gail, AAA GeorgiaCares Coordinator (left), accepts a Recognition of Achievement Award at a recent GeorgiaCares conference in Savannah.

Linda was the only coordinator in the state to reach these goals and was applauded for her long-running dedication to the GeorgiaCares program.

"It's such a blessing to work with individuals who share the common goal of helping seniors understand their benefits," said Linda. "I'm deeply honored to have received this award."

Both Bridget and Linda have proven their commendable dedication to the Aging industry, and the AAA anticipates continued excellence from these staff members in the years to come.