

# In the REGION

August ■ 2017

Valdosta

(229) 333-5277

Waycross

(912) 285-6097

A publication of the Southern Georgia Regional Commission

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

## SGRC Expands Assistive Technology With the Establishment of Tifton Lab

Area Agency on Aging: Wanda Taft



SGRC AAA agent Jerry Barber demonstrated various AT devices for clients and members of the public at the Leroy Rogers Senior Center on July 25th.

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission's Area Agency on Aging (SGRC AAA) formed a partnership with Georgia Tech's Tools for Life Program to help bring assistive technology (AT) to individuals with disabilities throughout the 18-county area. Tools for Life, Georgia's Assistive Technology Act Program, is dedicated to increasing access to and acquisition of AT devices and services for Georgians of all ages and disabilities so they can live, learn, work and play independently and with greater freedom in communities of their choice.



The initial partnership began with the development of the AT lab at the SGRC Waycross office in 2016, and has since grown. With assistance of additional funds for expansion from the Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services, the SGRC AAA collaborated with Tools for Life once again to develop an additional AT lab in Tifton. The lab, located at the Leroy Rogers Senior Center, is equipped with both high tech and low tech solutions aimed at assisting people who are faced with a disability. It showcases solutions for mobility issues, communication problems, vision and hearing loss, dementia and other disabilities. The lab is available for both members of the senior center and the public Monday through Friday from 8 am until 5 pm. Staff members are available to help individuals explore options through individual consultations.

"The lab has been a wonderful resource for our seniors," said Fran Kinchen, Leroy Rogers Senior Center Director. "We are delighted our seniors have access to tools that can help them remain more independent while living in the community."

Continued on page 2...

*Assistive Technology continued...*

The Tools for Life labs, along with AT assessment services, are another valuable resource available to individuals in Southern Georgia. By having access to assistive devices and staff with assistive technology expertise, individuals may be able to remain in their homes and communities longer.

For more information about the assistive technology labs, resources, assessments, and/or community outreach efforts, please contact Polly Wilson at 1-888-732-4464.

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## SGRC ITS Program Is Your Solution

*Information Technology Services: Chris Strom*

The SGRC ITS program is your solution for computer problems, with our PC support staff providing help to you in those moments of need. Whether it's a printer that is testing your patience, a network that won't work, a PC that has taken a turn for the worse, or a server that's stopped serving. No matter the problem, if it has buttons, wires, or a screen, we can help.



Since those buttons, wires, and screens aren't the only thing that can go wrong, the SGRC also has a wealth of programming and website development resources to help your city or county keep moving forward. Whether it is utility billing, finance, work orders, purchasing, taxes, jury selection or any other custom software needs you have, we have the resources to get the job done for you.

One example is our new Local Government Financial Software (LGFS) which is composed in the latest development language and environment, and is accessible through only a desktop internet browser. This means that there's no software to install on your computer and no need to worry about applying updates as time goes on. We manage that for you, and since our software is web-based, the work of finance department staff can be completed upon any computer that has access to the internet, regardless of location.

Our IT support and programming resources are here to help you prepare for the future also. Unfortunately, many cities and counties have budgets for every aspect of their operation except for the future of their IT resources. When you consider that nearly every department in government now depends upon connectivity and reliable hardware to perform basic functions, this is a troubling scenario. We strongly encourage our governments to develop a plan to be prepared for their future IT needs. The SGRC ITS program is here for you, so feel free to contact us if you'd like to learn more about how to prepare your IT infrastructure for the future.

For more information about how the SGRC IT and software development programs can help your community, please contact Larry Adams, email: [ladams@sgrc.us](mailto:ladams@sgrc.us) or call: 229-333-5277

# Coffee County Receives \$750,000 in CDBG-EIP Funds to Construct Rail Spur Improvements to Service Premium Peanut Expansion

*Community and Economic Development: Kimberly Hobbs*



*Completed Premium Peanut Shelling Facility*

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs awarded \$750,000 in Community Development Block Grant – Employment Incentive Program (CDBG-EIP) funds to Coffee County to construct much needed rail spur infrastructure improvements that will allow for the expansion of Premium Peanut, LLC. Premium Peanut is making a \$13.1 million private investment in its new peanut oil mill facility and has committed to the creation of 80 fulltime jobs.

Premium Peanut was formed in the fall of 2014 to provide a market for peanut growers in South Georgia. The Company is grower-owned and is committed to delivering the very best peanut possible. Premium Peanut invested \$48 million in its new, ultra-modern peanut shelling facility and began full production in May 2016. Premium Peanut processed 140,000 tons of peanuts during its first year of operation, and it is the single-largest peanut shelling facility in the world!



*Interior of Completed Premium Peanut Shelling*

Building upon the success of the start-up of Premium Peanut, company leaders identified an expansion opportunity. This expansion project will move the shelling facility to a 24/7 operation and will increase the annual amount of peanuts shelled to 220,000 tons in order to adequately supply the feed stock for the oil mill facility.

The oil mill will take the inedible shelled peanuts, called oilstock, from the main shelling plant and process them into two marketable products – peanut oil and meal. The oil is filtered and then ...



*Groundbreaking for Premium Peanut Oil Mill Facility*

*Continued on page 4...*



*Premium Peanut continued...*

stored in tanks until shipped by bulk rail or truck to customers as crude peanut oil. The meal is cooled, ground into a uniform size, and stored in a special tank until also shipped by bulk rail or truck to customers for use generally in animal feed or fertilizer products. The oil plant will generate over 16 million pounds of oil and 20 million pounds of peanut meal annually. Because both products will be primarily shipped by rail, the construction of the rail spur infrastructure improvements is imperative.

The successful CDBG-EIP application was written and submitted by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission. SGRC Community and Economic Development staff will administer the project.

## **SGRC Loan Program Assists Tracie Hart Insurance & Financial Services (THIS, LLC)**

*Loan Services: Michelle Frey*

Tracie Hart is the owner of Tracie Hart Insurance and Financial Services. She is from Adel, GA and has been in the insurance business for 24 years. She worked with Georgia Farm Bureau and Country Financial Insurance Agency before becoming an independent agent and opening her own agency in 2013. She currently has locations in Valdosta and Adel. Prior to this project, she had been renting a space in Adel.



Southern Georgia Area Resource Development Agency's (SGARDA) assistance was sought for the project and they partnered with Commercial Banking Company to fund the construction of a new office building for Ms. Hart in Adel. SGARDA funded 50% of the project and was able to offer a slightly lower rate fixed for an extended period on their portion of the loan.

Check out Tracie Hart Insurance and Financial Service's new Adel location at 407 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street or at the Valdosta location at 3350 A Noble Way. THIS, LLC offers Commercial and Worker's Compensation lines as well as Personal Auto and Home lines through several different carriers.

You may view the website at: <http://www.traciehartins.com/> or contact them at (229) 896-1471 (Adel) or 229-469-7297 (Valdosta).

## **Georgia Gerontology Society Selects SGRC AAA Staff for Award**

*Area Agency on Aging: Wanda Taft*

The Louis Newmark Award recognizes an individual who has provided at least ten years of service to the field of aging, with particular attention to the Georgia Gerontology Society (GGS). Scott Courson recently received this award at the Georgia Gerontology Society 2017 Annual Conference in Braselton.

Scott has been a dedicated employee to the SGRC AAA for the past seventeen years. In his position as Program Coordinator, Scott supervises three staff members and oversees almost thirty contracts. As if these duties weren't enough, he also finds time for a host of other tasks. Just to name a few, he manages the AAA Facebook page, coordinates agency fundraisers, advocates for seniors through work with CO-AGE (Coalition of Advocates for Georgia's Elderly), and maintains the Be There 4 Seniors Facebook page.

Scott has also had a long history of participating in GGS. He earned a GGS Citation of Merit Award in 2012, and he began serving as a member of the GGS Board in 2013.

Scott's dedication to his work has earned him the respect of his coworkers at the Regional Commission, as well as that of the entire aging network. Ask people who know him who they can call for assistance with a technical or programmatic issue – they'll all answer, "Scott."

Scott is good at most anything he attempts, but it's more than that. His job is not just a job to him; he has a passion for senior services.

The SGRC is fortunate to have Scott as a staff member and congratulates him for being the 2017 recipient of the Georgia Gerontology Society Louis Newmark Award.



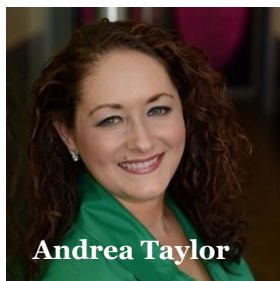
*Scott Courson is the 2017 Georgia Gerontology Society Louis Newmark Award recipient. Pictured (l-r) GGS President Jennifer Beamer, SGRC AAA Director Wanda Taft, SGRA AAA Program Coordinator Scott Courson and GGS Executive Director Amanda James.*

## WorkSource Southern Georgia Welcomes New Board Members

*Workforce Development: Roberta Lovett*

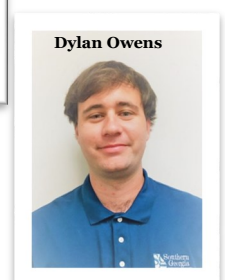
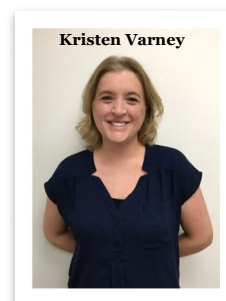
The Southern Georgia Workforce Development Board/WorkSource Southern Georgia would like to welcome the following new members.

<b>Barry Bloom</b> Coffee Regional Medical Center	<b>Greg Hendley</b> (not pictured) South Central Primary Care Center
<b>Kevin Ellis</b> Alma/Bacon County Development Authority	<b>Sharon Vickers</b> Shady Acres Health and Rehabilitation
<b>Cheryl Dubose</b> (not pictured) Bacon County Hospital	<b>Brian Marlowe</b> Tifton-Tift County Chamber of Commerce & Development Authority
<b>Myrtice Edwards</b> Telamon Corporation	<b>Andrea Taylor</b> Douglas-Coffee County Chamber of Commerce & Economic Dev.
<b>Adam Tolle</b> Byrt CPA's LLC	<b>Ben Lott</b> (not pictured) International Union of Painters & Allied Trades, District Council 77



## New Faces at the RC

We have some new faces at the SGRC. Dylan Owens and Kristen Varney have joined the GIS team, and Dominique Richardson has joined the Finance and Administration team. The SGRC sends a warm welcome to our new team members.





## in ■ the REGION

# Region 11 City & County Clerks Meeting

The City of Pavo hosted the Region 11 City and County Clerks meeting on July 12, 2017. William Curry with the US Census Bureau spoke to the clerks on the importance of the upcoming 2020 census and how to utilize the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA). The clerks enjoyed lunch provided by the City of Pavo and would like to thank Becky Jo Reyes, City of Pavo Clerk, for her gracious hospitality.

The next Region 11 Clerks Meeting will be held Wednesday October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and hosted by the City of Ashburn. For more information contact Tish Mercer 912-285-6097 or [timercer@sgrc.us](mailto:timercer@sgrc.us).



## 2nd Annual City Hall Selfie Day

On August 15 cities across Georgia participated in the Georgia Municipal Association's Engaging Local Government Leaders 2nd Annual City Hall Selfie Day. Here are just a few pictures from our region.





327 W. Savannah Avenue  
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

1725 South Georgia Parkway, West  
Waycross, GA 31503

## SGRC Council

Joyce Evans, Chair      Lee Gowen, Vice-Chair      Peggy Murphy, Secretary

### Atkinson

Lace Futch  
Bettye D. Williams  
Janice McKinnon

### Berrien

Doc Sumner  
Michael Richbourg  
Janet Studstill

### Charlton

James Everett  
Lee Gowen  
Dawn Malin

### Cook

Dwight Purvis  
Buddy Duke  
Vacant

### Lanier

Dennis Fender  
Bill Darsey  
Sandy Sanders

### Tift

Grady Thompson  
Julie Smith  
Brian Marlowe

### Governor's Office

Gary Strickland  
Vacant  
Vacant

### Bacon

Andy Hutto  
Peggy Murphy  
Lisa Coley

### Brantley

Skipper Harris  
Diane Morgan  
Richard Thornton

### Clinch

Roger Metts  
Tom Kennedy  
Willie Hardee, Jr.

### Echols

Bobby Walker  
Vacant  
Vacant

### Lowndes

Joyce Evans  
Vivian Miller-Cody  
Anthony Payton

### Turner

Sam McCard  
Sandra Lumpkin  
Stevi Thompson

### Lt. Governor's Office

Keith Stone

### Ben Hill

Steve Taylor  
Mark Massee  
Jason Dunn

### Brooks

Myra Exum  
James Brown  
Vacant

### Coffee

Oscar Paulk  
Vacant  
Adam Smith

### Irwin

Joey Whitley  
Matt Seale  
Mona Paulk

### Pierce

Neal Bennett  
Mary Lott Walker  
Andy Brannen

### Ware

Carlos Nelson  
John Knox  
Barbara King

### Speakers Office

Vacant

## REGIONAL CALENDAR

### August 2017

- ⇒ 10-11 GMA Summer Training Event & 2017 Georgia Government Communications Conference, Jekyll Island
- ⇒ 22-25 GMA Georgia Environmental Conference, Jekyll Island
- ⇒ 24 SGRC Council Meeting, Pearson

### September 2017

- ⇒ 28 SGRC Council Meeting, Pearson