

JACKSON COUNTY BOC HOLDS RETREAT

Executive Director **Jim Dove** and Executive Assistant **Mott Beck** facilitated a day-long retreat for the Jackson County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, July 19th at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education. The Commissioners engaged in discussion on a number of timely issues including the comprehensive plan and short term work program, financial report, debt profile, FY12 budget priorities, and redistricting. In addition, based on items previously submitted by the Commissioners, short term goals and objectives were set for a number of items. These include a roads priority plan, master plan for public facilities, personnel matters, animal control, Jackson County Airport, housing inmates in dorms at the Fire Training Center, conversion of vehicles to LP, review of fees, and review of the bidding process. In addition to Chairman Hunter Bicknell and Commissioners **Tom Crow**, **Chas Hardy**, **Dwain Smith**, and **Bruce Yates**, several key staff members participated in the session.



Jackson County Commissioners and staff at retreat

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT SPOTLIGHT

(The following is illustrative of efforts in which our Workforce Investment Division is involved. Only the first name of the client is used to protect her anonymity.)

Jennifer was a stay-at-home mom for 14 years, raising five boys in Madison County until she and her husband divorced. With only a high school diploma, she knew that she was going to have to return to school in order to support the children. Jennifer had a friend that went through Athens Technical College's nursing program with financial assistance through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), and that friend advised Jennifer to give the WIA office a call. Jennifer decided to do just that and in November 2009 enrolled at Athens Technical College with the help of WIA in the Surgical Technology program. Jennifer received the HOPE grant, but it was WIA that really helped get her through. By assisting her with afterschool childcare, transportation, books, uniforms, equipment and certifications, Jennifer was able to complete the program in December 2010. Jennifer is now working full-time at Northridge Medical Center as a Surgical Technician. She said, "If it was not for WIA, I would never have been able to return to school. I love what I'm doing, not only can I provide for my boys financially but I'm now a role model for them as well. I have told many of my friends about the WIA program and how it helped me and my family. As a single mom, if I can do it, anyone can; the resources are out there, all you have to do is call."

In the 12 county Northeast Georgia area, the Northeast Georgia Workforce Investment Board (WIB) through the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, provides a variety of services made possible by funding through the WIA. Last year, over 3,094 Northeast Georgia residents utilized the Northeast Georgia WIA for job search, career advisement, and retraining services. Many of the customers were laid-off from their jobs due to down-sizing or business closures in the area. WIA program participation rates have gone up 200% in Northeast Georgia in the past two years. Over 240 different employers hired persons who had received retraining assistance utilizing WIA funds.

For additional information on the services available through the Northeast Georgia Workforce Investment Board, contact **Carol Rayburn Cofer** at (706) 369-5703 or crayburn@negrc.org.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING NEWS

Northeast Georgia Care-Net to Honor Outstanding Caregivers

More than 850,000 family caregivers in Georgia provide billions of dollars of care to family members living with chronic illnesses, disabilities and limitations of aging. They are supported in their work by an army of dedicated volunteer and paraprofessional caregivers. The work of these individuals together makes it possible for Georgians with disabilities and chronic illnesses to live with dignity in the community.

To honor their work and to focus public attention on the contributions of caregivers throughout the state, the Rosalynn Carter Institute on Caregiving in cooperation with the Georgia CARE-NETS is proud to continue the **Georgia Caregiver of the Year Awards**. These awards will be presented to exemplary caregivers in three categories:

Family Caregiver (any family member providing assistance to a person with a disability, chronic illness or other condition requiring support and assistance to have a full life in the community or a non-relative perceived as family, such as neighbor or friend).

Para-Professional Caregivers (Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Therapy Aide, Home Health Aide, Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Nurse's Aide/Patient Care Technician, Direct Support Caregiver).

Volunteer Caregiver (a volunteer that has completed at least one year of service caring for an individual or individuals in a capacity that aids and/or improves their life or a volunteer that has made a substantial difference in the life of their family).

Do you know a caregiver with these characteristics? If so, please nominate him/her.

The NEGA CARE-NET will select three regional winners, one from each category. These winners will be honored during a Caregiver Celebration in November 2011. The nominations of the local winners will be sent to the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving to be considered for the Georgia Caregiver of the Year Awards.

Mrs. Rosalynn Carter will announce the Georgia winners during an Anniversary Gala that will be held within the 2011 National Summit and Training Institute, to be held October 5-7, 2011 at Georgia Southwestern State University in Americus, Georgia. She will present the Georgia winners in each of the three categories with a cash award of \$1,000 and a commemorative gilded rose. To be eligible for the award, a caregiver must be currently providing care, or must have provided care within the past year.

For additional information or to request a form to nominate an outstanding caregiver in the NEGA region, please contact **Michele Kelley** at **(706) 369-5650**. Completed nomination forms must be submitted by August 5, 2011.

The Year of the Family Caregiver

The U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA) has designated 2011 as "The Year of the Family Caregiver," a yearlong celebration to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP). AoA is working in concert with national caregiver organizations and associations to mark this important achievement. AoA is also encouraging states, organizations and communities to recognize the important role family and friends play in caring for friends and loved ones, and to celebrate the impact of caregiver support services, including the NFCSP.

AoA has created a new web site (<http://www.celebratingfamilycaregivers.org>) to assist in designing and holding NFCSP 10th Anniversary events. This AoA site includes materials and resources to assist in planning events and recognizing caregivers.

CLARKE COUNTY YOUTH GAINS EXPERIENCE

Rising Clarke Central High School senior **Nick Chavis** has spent four weeks of his summer break learning what it means to be employed. As a participant in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) In-School Youth Program, he was given the opportunity to work at the Athens Housing Authority. Nick worked with Dr. Geraldine Clarke, helping with the summer lunch program and the day to day operation of the Housing Authority. Nick has worked hard this summer learning the operations of the program, and learning workplace responsibility. In fact, Nick has helped so much with the summer lunch program that Dr. Clarke has hired him for several hours a day for the rest of the summer. "I can't do this without him," Dr. Clarke says.

The WIA program, administered by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission under the oversight of the Northeast Georgia Workforce Investment Board, works with income eligible youth in the twelve county area (Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Jasper, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Oglethorpe, and Walton counties). During Summer 2011, 239 youth worked at local government and non-profit agencies throughout the twelve county area. The youth could work up to four weeks, up to 30 hours per week, and were paid minimum wage through the WIA. Throughout the school year, the students work with case managers to ensure they are on track in school with grades, attendance, and behavior. The youth attend workshops that help them with money management, leadership, work skills, and career pathways.

Georgia has one of the highest teen unemployment rates in the country. Participation in the WIA Summer Youth Work Experience component provided these youth an opportunity to gain experience that probably would have been impossible if they tried to find unsubsidized work in their communities. Nick, along with the other 238 youth who participated in the WIA Summer Work Experience, have learned skills most youths their age have not been exposed to.

For further information on the WIA Youth Programs in Northeast Georgia, please contact **Danielle Ingels** at **(706) 369-5703** or dingels@negrc.org.

GMA CONVENTION HELD IN SAVANNAH

The Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) held its 78th Annual Convention on June 25th – 28th at the International Trade and Convention Center in Savannah. Over 1,500 city officials and others gathered to map out legislative plans for the upcoming year, discuss issues affecting Georgia's cities, and to network with other city leaders. This year's theme for the convention was "**Defining Georgia's Future**". The Municipal Training Sessions were held on Saturday, followed by the Opening General Session on Sunday. Session topics focused on issues such as sustainability, cemeteries, downtown economic development efforts, communications, promotion of attractions, land banks, and openness/transparency of government.

There are several Northeast Georgians in leadership positions for 2011-12. Athens-Clarke Mayor **Nancy Denson** is a Director-at-Large, and members of the Legislative Policy Council include Auburn Mayor **Linda Blechinger**, Walnut Grove Mayor **Don Cannon**, Covington Mayor **Kim Carter**, and Madison Councilmember **Mike Naples**. Fifth District officers include President **Mark Fitzpatrick**, a Councilmember in Commerce, and First Vice President **Hawneitha Williams**, a Councilmember in Covington.

Executive Assistant **Mott Beck** represented NEGRC at the meeting and was prominent at the Georgia Association of Regional Commission's (GARC) exhibit.



(L-R) Sarah Walls, RVRC; Lisa Cribb, SGRC; and Mott Beck, NEGRC



NEGRC TO RECEIVE INNOVATION AWARD

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC) was notified recently that it will receive a 2011 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for efforts related to the Shields-Ethridge Farm Interpretative Program.

The Farm is one of Georgia's most intact historic farms that functions as an outdoor, agricultural museum and operates as a non-profit organization. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, recognized as a Georgia Centennial Farm, and identified as a Regionally Important Resource. Like many non-profit museums, a major challenge is to provide and operate tours and interpretative programs on a limited budget and with only a volunteer staff. The Farm similarly faced a great need, in the past, to open its doors for increased public visitation towards promoting tourism and fostering economic development within the Northeast Georgia Region. With assistance from our staff, the Farm worked to identify potential solutions to accommodate greater visitation with low operation and maintenance costs. The result was the idea for a self guided interpretative program that would use a range of innovative tools to attract and benefit national and international visitors. NEGRC subsequently developed a successful grant application for financial support from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to implement this concept that increased regional tourism opportunities to one of the state's most significant historic farms and a key tourism asset.

NADO, located in Washington, DC, promotes programs and policies that strengthen local governments, communities, and economies through cooperation, program delivery, and comprehensive strategies. The Association's Innovation Awards Program recognizes regional development organizations and partnering organizations for improving the economic and community competitiveness of our nation's regions and local communities. Award winners will be showcased at NADO's Annual Training Conference. This is the 12th year that NEGRC has received this award.

REGIONAL COMMISSION ASSISTS WITH REDISTRICTING

The NEGRC's Planning and Government Services (PGS) Division is offering GIS assistance to our local governments in preparing redistricting plans based on the 2010 Census. To date, PGS has assisted the Cities of Monroe, Social Circle, and Winder, as well as Jasper and Oglethorpe Counties. The fee for preparing a basic package of services is \$1,478. This package includes a base map, analysis of current population by district, and three options to consider and discuss in the community in order to develop new district boundaries. Contact **Steve Cumblidge** at **(706) 369-5650** or email: **scumblidge@negrc.org** for further details.

REMINDER

The next meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Council will be held on **Thursday, August 18th at noon at the Athens Holiday Inn**. Information on the meeting will be forthcoming.

Update

REGIONAL MEETINGS AUGUST

17	2:00 p.m.	UOBWA Operations Committee	Bear Creek Reservoir
17	3:30 p.m.	Bicycle/Pedestrian Task Force	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
18	9:00 a.m.	Firefly Trails Advisory Group	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
18	Noon	NEGRC Commission Council	Athens Holiday Inn
19	10:00 a.m.	Senior Center Directors	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room



Sincerely & Respectfully,