

## ANNUAL AWARDS PRESENTED BY NEGRC

Oconee County Board of Commissioners Chairman **Melvin Davis** is the 2015 recipient of the Robert L. and Betty Williford Distinguished Northeast Georgian Award. The presentation was made at the Annual Meeting of the NEGRC Council, held in conjunction with its May meeting. Our honoree was elected as the full-time Chairman in Oconee in 2001 and is currently serving in his fourth, four-year term. He is a past Chairman of our Council and serves as Chairman of the Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority (UOBWA). Also since 2001, he has been a member and/or served as Chairman of the Madison, Athens-Clarke, Oconee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MACORTS). He has served ACCG as a member of the Executive Committee, as an officer of the Board of Managers, as President in 2011-12, and now serves as Past President. In 2014, Chairman Davis received the Emory Greene Leadership Award, the highest award presented by ACCG. The award recognizes a county commissioner who has made significant contributions in the local community and at the state level. Chairman Davis retired from the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service in 1993 after a distinguished career. NEGRC Chairman Kevin Little stated, "It is my pleasure to work alongside Melvin regarding a number of regional and statewide issues. He is always mindful of the interests of his constituency and is truly a public servant."

Elberton City Manager **Lanier Dunn** was honored at the event as Local Government Administrator of the Year. He was appointed to his present position in 2006, and previously served as the City's Accountant, Business Manager, and Controller. Mr. Dunn is a member of the Board of Directors of Georgia Public Web, Inc., a Georgia non-profit corporation formed in 1998 to help "bridge Georgia's digital divide" by delivering high-end technology services to metro Atlanta and communities throughout the state. He also serves on the Accounting Advisory Committee of Athens Technical College. He attended the University of Georgia where he graduated Magna Cum Laude in Banking and Finance at the Terry College of Business. He completed his Master of Business Administration Degree at Brenau University. According to NEGRC Executive Director Jim Dove, "Lanier's professional approach to managing the City of Elberton has paid huge dividends. He enjoys the respect of elected and appointed officials throughout the region and the state."

Walton County Board of Commissioners Chairman **Kevin Little** was presented an award for two years' service as NEGRC Chairman. Currently serving a fourth, four-year term as Walton County Chairman, he has traveled to many meetings on behalf of NEGRC, including multiple annual conferences of the Georgia Association of Regional Commissions, and has worked to ensure that our overall work program is balanced among regional efforts and local efforts important to the local governments we serve. Chairman Little earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Public Administration and Political Science from Georgia College in Milledgeville. In April, he completed a term as ACCG President. He has been instrumental in efforts to construct the Hard Labor Creek Reservoir which will provide drinking water to multiple units of government, and has been a leader regarding regional transportation issues. In presenting the award, Awards Committee Member Jerry Roseberry said, "Throughout the history of our organization, we have been blessed with a group of Chairs truly interested in promoting the concept of regionalism and the advantages of cooperation in coordinating matters that cross city, county, and regional boundaries. This year's Chair is no exception."

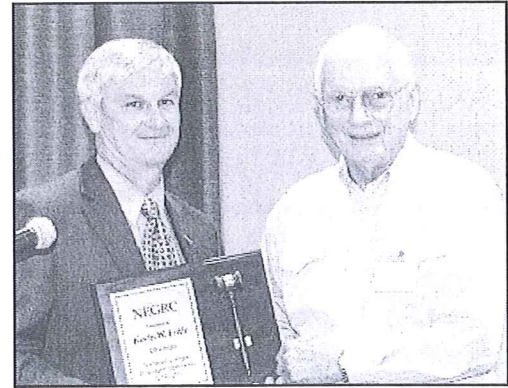
Congratulations to each of our Award winners!



Lamar Houston and Chairman Davis



Executive Director Dove and Mr. Dunn



Chairman Little and Mayor Roseberry



## LYON INSTALLED AS ACCG FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Elbert County Board of Commissioners Chairman **Tommy Lyon** was installed on April 19<sup>th</sup> as ACCG First Vice President during a ceremony conducted by U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson as part of the 2015 Annual Conference. Chairman Lyon is slated to become ACCG President in 2016.

ACCG is Georgia's county association and works on behalf of county officials and their communities by providing public policy and legislative advocacy, leadership development, civic and community engagement initiatives, insurance and retirement programs that specialize in local government needs and other cost-saving programs. ACCG was formed in 1914 when county officials came together to help fund the state's first highway department.

As ACCG First Vice President, Chairman Lyon will serve as a member of the Executive Committee and work with other officers and staff to lead the Association and guide policies. He is charged as the Board liaison to the Association's membership services programs, including insurance, retirement, technical assistance, and preferred partnerships.

"I am proud and honored to be selected to serve as First Vice President of ACCG, an organization that is respected by the Georgia Legislature for its integrity and common sense approach to government," said Chairman Lyon. He was first elected to serve as Elbert County Chairman in 2006 and is currently serving a third, four-year term. He is Chairman of the NEGRC Planning and Government Services Committee. Walton County Chairman **Kevin Little** serves as ACCG Immediate Past President and Oglethorpe County Chairman **Billy Pittard** is District 5 Representative to the Board of Managers. Oconee County Chairman **Melvin Davis** is an active Past President.

### REMINDER

The next meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Council will be held on **Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup> at Noon at the Athens Holiday Inn**. Information on the meeting will be forthcoming.

## NEGRC REPRESENTED AT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EVENT

The Georgia Association of Regional Commissions (GARC) held its annual Economic Development Conference on May 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> at Lake Lanier Islands. NEGRC representatives included Council Member and Past Chairman **Lamar Houston**, Executive Director **Jim Dove**, and Planning and Government Services Director **Burke Walker**. The event kicked off on Sunday evening with a presentation by GEDA Executive Director **Kevin Shea**, and featured a keynote address on Monday evening by DCA Commissioner **Camila Knowles**. Other presentations featured Legal Counsel **Kevin Brown**; **Lee Thomas**

and **Sandy Lake** of GDEcD; panel members **Doug Hooker**, **Ralph Nix**, **Louise Hill**, and **Rich McCline** speaking on regional leadership; **Bailey White** of Civitium, and **Jonathan Corso** of EDA. Prior to the meeting, **Annaka Woodruff** of DCA met with RCs involved with Appalachian Regional Commission programs and projects. The event concluded on Tuesday with the quarterly meeting of the GARC Board.

## NORTHEAST GEORGIA TRAIL PROJECTS AWARDED GRANT



Four trails projects in the Northeast Georgia region were selected for Recreational Trails Program grant funding for the 2015 grant cycle. Administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, the Recreational Trails Program funds hiking, biking, and horseback trails, in addition to canoe and kayak launches. Funding is also available for trails that accommodate motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles. This year, 27 projects were selected from across the state of Georgia, totaling \$2.5 million for trails.

Successful applicants in the region include two trail maintenance projects in the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest: the equestrian Ocmulgee River Trail in Jasper County and the Town Creek ATV Trail in Greene County. Additionally, a canoe and kayak boat launch for the Yellow River Water Trail near Brown Bridge Road Bridge in Newton County was selected for funding, as well as a nature trail and pavilion for Pittard Park in the City of Winterville. The grant, which requires recipients to provide 20 percent of the project cost, will bring in over \$380,000 to the region for trail funding.

Communities interested in funding their trail projects with the Recreational Trails Program can visit [www.gastateparks.org](http://www.gastateparks.org) for more information. The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission's Planning & Government Services (PGS) Division is available to help prepare the grant application, which will be due in the fall. Please contact **Theresa Owen**, Planner at [towen@negrc.org](mailto:towen@negrc.org) with questions.

*(Walt Kelly's famous cartoon possum has served as the ambassador for Georgia Trails and Greenways since 1993.)*

## NORTHEAST GEORGIA MANUFACTURING TRAINING IN COLLABORATION WITH ATHENS TECHNICAL COLLEGE AND GEORGIA PIEDMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE

As manufacturing employment opportunities continue to grow in Northeast Georgia, a skilled and trained workforce is essential to continued economic development. During the months of March and April, Athens Technical College and Georgia Piedmont Technical College, in partnership with Northeast Georgia Workforce Development, completed three courses highlighting Workplace Skills. These classes were 5 weeks long, and held in Greene County, Newton County and Morgan County. Participants were currently unemployed, and looking to get back into the workforce. After consultation with



local companies and training providers, a curriculum was developed that included OSHA Certification, Forklift Certification, Manufacturing Principles, Soft Skills, Computer Skills, and more! The three classes combined graduated a total of 14 students, and within a week of graduation, 11 of the 14 students had gained employment! There will be another Workplace Fundamentals class at the Athens campus of Athens Technical College starting in April, and a class is being recruited for Greene County. Interested individuals can call **(706) 369-5763**. A class in Morgan County is scheduled for late summer.

For further information on these or other workforce development training programs available to residents in Northeast Georgia, please contact the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission's Workforce Development Division at **(706) 369-5703**.

## PGS STAFF SERVES ON URBAN LAND INSTITUTE PANEL FOR ATHENS CORRIDOR

On May 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, NEGRC Senior Planner **John Devine** served on an Urban Land Institute (ULI) Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) for the Lexington Road/US 78 corridor between the Athens Loop and Whit Davis Road. The TAP's main objective was to provide recommendations to the Athens-Clarke County Unified Government (ACCUG) on stimulating growth and development in the study area. Specific focal points included highest and best use, employment and workforce training, natural resources protection, transportation, and utilization of the Athens-Ben Epps Airport. Experts from the fields of architecture, community development, economic development, landscape architecture, and real estate services also participated as panelists; ULI also provided a technical writer.

TAP work commenced with a bus tour of the study area, followed by panelist interviews with local officials, members of the ACCUG's Lexington Road Study Group, and others to provide detail and identify priorities for the corridor. A daylong planning and design session produced the panel's major recommendations, which focused on economic development through multimodal transportation investment (similar to Atlanta's Beltline), "impact" projects such as a cultural or brewery tourism "trail," and the establishment of a community improvement district (CID) or tax allocation district (TAD). The panel presented these recommendations to ACCUG Commissioners, staff, and Study Group members, with a final report from ULI to follow this summer.

ULI's TAP program is administered through the Institute's district offices; ULI Atlanta is online at [atlanta.uli.org](http://atlanta.uli.org). For more information on the Lexington Rd./US 78 TAP, contact Mr. Devine at [jdevine@negrc.org](mailto:jdevine@negrc.org).

## JIM DOVE RECOGNIZED WITH REGION EMS SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

*(submitted by Don Cargile, National EMS)*

**Jim Dove**, Executive Director for the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, was recently presented with the 2015 Regional EMS Special Achievement Award during the annual Region 10 EMS Awards Banquet.

The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual EMS Special Achievement Award, presented by State Office of EMS Director **Keith Wages**, recognizes an individual who demonstrates leadership and personal commitment to the achievement of excellence in EMS programs and successfully makes improvements and enhancements in our Northeast Georgia Region.

Dove, who has served as Chairman of the Northeast Georgia EMS Council for over 25 years, was recognized for the numerous contributions he has made in Emergency Medical Services since 1990. He has worked with the development of both Trauma and Stroke Centers in Georgia, as well as having facilitated discussions with County leaders and Hospital administrators to provide for a smooth transition of zoning issues with EMS providers.

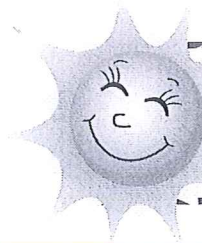
As a community leader, Dove has served as a member of the UGA Alumni Association, a former District Chairman of the American Heart Association, and served as a member of the Athens Rotary Club, which, in 1995, created the Community Safety Award to annually recognize an EMS professional who actively participates in injury prevention and safety programs for the community.

In 2011, Dove was recognized on the State level when he received the prestigious Joe Lane Cox Excellence in EMS Award, named for the late Mayor of Dawsonville and public servant in Dawson County, which for more than 20 years has been presented annually to the individual who unselfishly donates his or her time and efforts to continue the improvement of EMS in Georgia EMS regions and at the state and national levels.

Dove, who has served as Executive Director for the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission since 1987, is one of the longest tenured members of the Northeast Georgia EMS Council. The Special Achievement Award was presented during the 2015 Region 10 EMS Awards Banquet held on April 29 at the Oconee Civic Center in Watkinsville, which honored professionals from around the entire region for their achievements in EMS.



*Executive Director Dove and State Representative  
Chuck Williams*



*Have a safe  
& happy summer!*



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**REGIONAL MEETINGS**  
**JUNE**

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|    |            |                                       |                                |
|----|------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 10 | 1:00 p.m.  | NEGA Solid Waste Management Authority | E.H. Culpepper Conference Room |
| 16 | 1:00 p.m.  | NEGA Emergency Medical Services       | E.H. Culpepper Conference Room |
| 17 | 10:00 a.m. | NEGA Joint Development Authority      | E.H. Culpepper Conference Room |
| 18 | 12:00 p.m. | NEGRC Council                         | Athens Holiday Inn             |
| 18 | 3:30 p.m.  | Rails To Trails Advocacy Group        | E.H. Culpepper Conference Room |

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*Sincerely & Respectfully,*