

## RETREATS FACILITATED FOR GLGPA, MORGAN COUNTY AND PORTERDALE

Executive Director **Jim Dove** and Executive Assistant **Mott Beck** facilitated three retreats recently. The first was that of the Georgia Local Government Personnel Association (GLGPA) held at the UGA Georgia Center for Continuing Education on August 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Of the 14 GLGPA Board Members present for the annual event, four – **Karen Fraser, Susan Roberts, Sharron Robinson, and Tracey Clark** – are from the Northeast Georgia region. The majority of the meeting was devoted to the GLGPA Certification process. Attendees discussed the “good” and “bad” associated with the process, things that should or should not be changed, their perspective of the process in a perfect world, and benefits of Certification to GLGPA. Attendees worked on an action plan designed to accomplish enhancements to the process.

The annual planning retreat for the Morgan County Board of Commissioners was held on August 28<sup>th</sup> at the Southern Cross Ranch. Highlights of the session included discussion regarding a long-range recreation plan and new facilities/fields, roads and bridges initiatives, including paving, re-paving, and ROW maintenance, investigating a water resource for the County, formation of a Citizens’ Budget and Tax Committee, a new Assistant County Manager position, improving public relations and perception, new job and career opportunities, and public safety personnel augmentations. The BOC was able, also, to discuss additional topics including recycling and solid waste upgrades, possibility of water connectivity for Lake Oconee subdivisions, an employee recognition initiative, and the potential for County service delivery privatizations.

A Porterdale Blue Print Codification work session was held on September 8<sup>th</sup> at City Hall. In addition to the Mayor and Council Members, others attending included City staff, City Attorney, and members of the Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, Covington Housing Authority, and the Downtown Development Director. The evening’s goal was to review existing projects and programs and to discuss proposed projects and programs. Four key areas were explored – Community Programming, Economic Development, Organization, and Design. As the meeting wrapped up, it was suggested that a follow-up session be scheduled in the near future.



GLGPA



Morgan County



Village of Porterdale



## REVENUE COMMISSIONER LYNNE RILEY SPEAKS TO COUNCIL

Georgia Department of Revenue Commissioner **Lynne Riley** gave a very interesting and informative presentation at the August meeting of the NEGRC Council. She gave an overview of the mission of the Department of Revenue which is to administer the tax laws of the State of Georgia fairly and efficiently in order to promote public confidence and compliance, while providing excellent customer service. The Department was created in 1938 and is the principal tax-collecting agency for the State of Georgia. In addition to administering tax laws, the Department is responsible for enforcing laws and regulations pertaining to the control of alcoholic beverages and tobacco products in Georgia as well as motor vehicle tag and title administration. The Department is led by the Commissioner and has 964 employees within six divisions and a processing center. The Administrative Division provides administrative services for the Department. The Alcohol and Tobacco Division is involved in all aspects regarding alcohol and tobacco sales in the state, while the Compliance Division audits tax accounts, enforces compliance with the Public Revenue Code of Georgia, conducts taxpayer education seminars and assists in the collection of taxes. The Department's Local Government Services Division administers property tax laws and oversees much of the local county property tax assessment and collection process. The Processing Center performs upfront processing for all tax returns received by mail and electronically filed. The Taxpayer Services Division manages taxpayer protests and hearings, administers income tax laws, and administers the Corporate Net Worth Tax. The main headquarters is located in Atlanta; eleven Regional Offices are located throughout Georgia.

## ARC PRE-APPLICATIONS SUCCESSFULLY SUBMITTED

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission's (NEGRC) Planning & Government Services Division (PGS) recently prepared and submitted six Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant pre-applications at the request of its local governments. These applications seek financial assistance from ARC for a variety of projects ranging from strategic planning to job training and infrastructure development. These six pre-applications are currently under review by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for approval to proceed with full applications. Results of the review are anticipated by December 2015 from DCA.

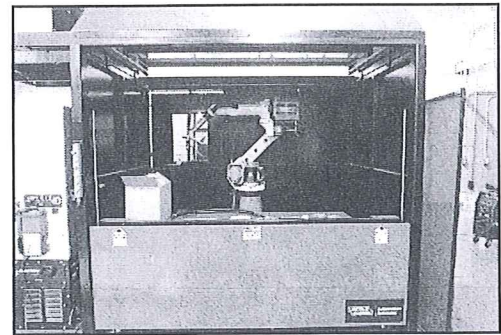
The NEGRC has four ARC counties that are eligible for ARC assistance. The six pre-applications were submitted from all four ARC counties including Barrow, Elbert, Jackson, and Madison. A summary of these proposed projects and pre-applications is below:

- **Barrow County:** access-road improvements into its Park 53 industrial park.
- **City of Bowman:** rehabilitation of a downtown building for its reuse as a branch, public library.
- **City of Colbert:** assistance in preparing a water and waste-water system Master Plan.
- **Elbert County:** preparation of a Master Plan for Bobby Brown Park.

- **City of Jefferson:** assistance for planning and strategic development of a re-branding campaign for the City's logo, website, and local signage.
- **Lanier Technical College in Barrow County:** funding assistance to support the purchase of equipment for a mechatronics instructional lab.

These projects, overall, address ARC strategic goals related to job creation, improving people, and infrastructure development. The six NEGRC projects will compete with other ARC pre-applications submitted by the other three ARC Regional Commissions in Georgia that, collectively, serve 37 counties.

For information about ARC, visit their website at [www.arc.gov](http://www.arc.gov) or DCA's website at <http://www.dca.state.ga.us/economic/financing/programs/arc.asp>. For NEGRC assistance or questions about potential ARC programs and activities in our region, contact **Burke Walker**, Director of Planning & Government Services (PGS), at (706) 369-5650 or email: [bwalker@negrc.org](mailto:bwalker@negrc.org).



*Scaled-Model Robotic Welder at Lanier Tech*

## PGS WORKSHOP REMINDER

The NEGRC is hosting a **FREE** Sustainable Economic Development Workshop on **Tuesday, October 20<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 a.m. – Noon**. Come hear **Bob Thomson**, City Manager of Porterdale, **Michael Roberts** from GEFA, and **Annaka Woodruff** from ARC discuss the possibilities of making your economic development projects more sustainable.

This will be a chance to learn about great resources for your community and network with other communities in the region. The workshop will be held at the NEGRC at 305 Research Dr. in Athens. **RSVP by October 14<sup>th</sup> to [jball@negrc.org](mailto:jball@negrc.org) or (706) 369-5650.**

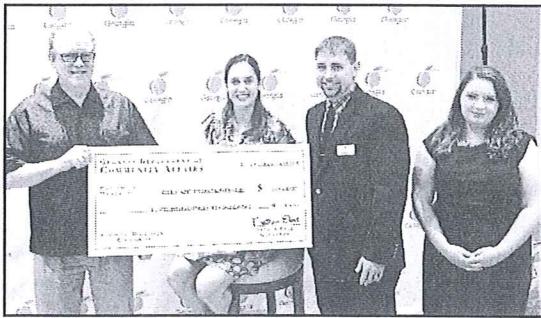
## NEGRC REGION RECEIVES 2015 CDBG AWARDS

The 2015 Community Block Development Grant (CDBG) Recipients' workshop was held on September 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> on Jekyll Island. The workshop was hosted by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and attended by NEGRC staff member, **Jordan Shoemaker**. The workshop provided information and tutorials to recipients on topics of grant administration (including Davis-Bacon), reporting, financial management, and fair housing. The workshop closed with remarks by DCA Commissioner **Camila Knowles** and the presentation of the 2015 awards.



Five communities in Northeast Georgia received CDBG funds for 2015. **Elbert County** received \$302,480 for neighborhood revitalization, and the **City of Porterdale** received \$500,000 for sewer improvements. NEGR staff prepared the City of Porterdale application and assisted with the Elbert County application. The State of Georgia also issued Redevelopment Funds (RDF) grants to three communities, all of which were in Northeast Georgia. The RDF provides funds to leverage investments for projects aimed at "eliminating slums or blight." The cities of **Auburn**, **Greensboro**, and **Madison** received funding for such projects. The City of Auburn was awarded \$500,000 to rehabilitate the former Perry-Rainey Institute into the "Auburn Center" which will be used for community events and Lanier Technical College classes. The City of Madison was awarded \$100,912 to redevelop a property into the Gilmore Property Corner Pantry Store. Both of these applications were prepared by NEGR staff that will also provide assistance in grant administration. Congratulations to all these communities.

For additional questions about the CDBG program, please contact Mr. Walker.



(L-R) Porterdale Manager Bob Thomson, DCA Commissioner Camila Knowles, Chase West with Carter & Sloope, and Jordan Shoemaker, NEGR

## REMINDER

The next meeting of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission will be held on **Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at Noon at the Athens Holiday Inn**. Information on the meeting will be forthcoming.

## GEORGIA TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

As a reminder, the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation annual awards nominations are due by **Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup>**. The awards recognize excellence and accomplishment in historic preservation. Awards are made based on the contribution of a project or person to the community or state and compliance with the rigorous *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

The categories include Excellence in Rehabilitation, Sustainable Rehabilitation, Restoration, Preservation, Stewardship, and Preservation Service. Last year, four properties in Northeast Georgia received recognition. For Excellence in Rehabilitation, the Georgia Trust recognized the Bogart Historic Agricultural Center in the **Town of Bogart**, the Braselton Brothers Store in **Town of Braselton**, and the McLeroy House in **City of Madison**. The Jackson Street Building (formerly the Lamar Dodd School of Art) on UGA's historic North

Campus was recognized for Excellence in Sustainable Rehabilitation. Mrs. **Christine Lambert** of Madison received the Mary Gregory Jewett Award for distinguished service in the field of preservation.

For more information or assistance in preparing an application, please contact Ms. Shoemaker, NEGR Project Specialist, at [jshoemaker@negrc.org](mailto:jshoemaker@negrc.org) or (706)369-5650.

## MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

Open enrollment for Medicare Part C and D begins October 15<sup>th</sup>, and you will have until December 7<sup>th</sup> to make your drug and health plan choices. With so many options available, choosing the right one is important. There is only one election period for both Parts C and D. After this time, plan changes can be made during the Annual Disenrollment Period of January 1<sup>st</sup> - February 14<sup>th</sup> of each year; and during this period, you will only be allowed to leave a Medicare Part C plan and return to Original Medicare (Parts A and B) with the option of choosing a prescription drug plan.

GeorgiaCares provides free one-on-one assistance so that callers can get personalized help as they compare their options and decide on which plans best meet their needs. GeorgiaCares urges everyone to review their coverage and make sure that any changes to the plan for 2016 still meets their needs. If you do not want to make a change, you can remain in your current plan from 2015 as long as the plan is still available. GeorgiaCares urges you to compare your plan as close to October 15<sup>th</sup> as possible so you will have plenty of time to make an informed decision. If you are interested in a Medicare Advantage Plan, you should talk to your doctors and other medical providers to find out which plans they accept.

Medicare Open Enrollment is also open season for identity thieves. The most common ploy: Posing as employees from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) or other government agencies, scammers claim that new cards are being issued. To get yours, they say, you need to verify or update sensitive information, including your Medicare number, which likely is also your Social Security number. There are ways to guard your Medicare number, such as the following:

- Don't give out any account numbers, including bank account numbers.
- Don't trust caller ID, information on the display can easily be manipulated.
- Stay away from "free" offers for medical supplies, along with pop-up storefronts and traveling clinics offering free health checkups that require personal data.
- Don't let anyone pressure you into buying supplemental insurance products that will supposedly save you thousands.
- Don't trust anyone that says they know what to do to get around Medicare not paying for something.
- Don't trust anyone that says you can get a kickback for providing your Medicare number or undergoing unnecessary treatment.

For additional information, contact **GeorgiaCares** at **1-866-55AGING (1-866-552-4464), Option 4**. Staff can also be reached at [www.mygeorgiacares.org](http://www.mygeorgiacares.org) or at [www.facebook.com/GeorgiaCares](https://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaCares).



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**REGIONAL MEETINGS**  
**OCTOBER**

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13	8:30 a.m.	Workforce Investment Board	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
15	Noon	NEGRC Council	Athens Holiday Inn
15	3:30 p.m.	Firefly Trails Advocacy Group	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room
21	1:30 p.m.	Aging Advisory Council	E.H. Culpepper Conference Room

*Sincerely & Respectfully,*