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327 W. Savannah Avenue
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

REGIONAL CALENDAR

APRIL

- ⇒ April 21-23 ACCG, Savannah
- ⇒ April 25 Census Training, RDC
- ⇒ April 26 RDC Board Mtg., Adel

MAY

- ⇒ May 7-8 RDC EDPros, Brasstown
- ⇒ May 17 Legislative Appreciation, Dinnerman's Farm, Adel
- ⇒ May 16 Planned Dev. Training, RDC
- ⇒ May 20-21 SERDI, St. Simons

in the REGION

APRIL 2007

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

Stockton Fire Department Receives \$176,764 Assistance To Firefighters Grant

With the assistance of the SGRDC, the Stockton Fire Department has been awarded a \$176,764 grant from the Department of Homeland Security to purchase a Class A pumper truck with NFPA standard equipment. The department is one of the 4,747 departments nationwide awarded \$461,092,358 in 2006 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) funds to meet the fire-fighting and emergency response needs of fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical services organizations.



Since 2001, the AFG program has helped firefighters and other first responders to obtain critically needed equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training, and other resources needed to protect the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards. The 2007 application period is now open and applications are due by May 4, 2007. For additional information, please see the website at <http://www.firegrantsupport.com/afg>.

Community and Economic Development

Contact: Sherry Davidson

Traffic Crash Report Is No Accident

The South Georgia RDC through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has compiled the first comprehensive traffic crash report for Valdosta and Lowndes County detailing crash statistics from 2000-2005. This data was compiled by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and analyzed using the Critical Analysis Reporting Environment (CARE) software developed by the University of Alabama.

hot spots throughout the metropolitan area. This data is available statewide and can assist local municipalities in assessing safety needs. The information is taken from the Georgia Uniform Motor Vehicle Accident Report which law enforcement agencies collect at the crash location.

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act (signed into law August of 2005)

Highway crash data is the foundation in the identification of safety deficiencies and provides support for transportation projects being developed through the MPO. This report will be updated annually to provide planners, engineers, law enforcement, emergency responders, and others a means of tracking



requires states to develop Strategic Highway Safety Plans which outline goals and objectives or other measures to reduce crash severity throughout the nation. For more information contact Mr. Dan McGee, Transportation Planning Coordinator at the South Georgia RDC (229)333-5277.

Information Technology Services

Contact: Vance Roberts

ITS Adds Signature Capture Device to City's Permit Office

The South GA RDC Computer Center has recently added the ability to capture and print signatures on a permit for the City of Valdosta. Prior to this, the customer would be asked to sign the permit, then the permit office would have to make a copy of the permit with the signature. Now, the customer will be asked to sign a small signature capture device and the signature will be printed on the original permit.

Also, if there is ever a need to reprint the permit, the signature will automatically be included. The next step to be added to this process is to eliminate the need to scan the permit into long term digital storage by creating the digital image in the City's Laser-Fische system.



Loan Program

Contact: Michelle Frey

Loan Program Assists Blanton Griffin Insurance Agency's Move To New Offices

Blanton Griffin Insurance Agency and its predecessors have been in business in Valdosta continuously since 1926. The agency moved into their new building at 908 N. Patterson in early 2007.



The move was precipitated by a lack of space at their previous location. Since 1986, Blanton Griffin has grown from three people to 23, both through internal growth and acquisition of other agencies. The new building will allow for 7 more employees.

The South Georgia RDC, through our Revolving Loan Fund, is participating with Regions Bank to finance the building.

Local Government Assistance

Contact: John Leonard/Marty LeFiles

RDC Employee Recognized For Service

Mayor Paul Johnson, Chairman of the South Georgia RDC Board of Director presents Sherry Olson with her service award plaque at the March Board of Director's Meeting. Sherry has been working at South Georgia Regional Development Center for 10 years.



Sherry Olson & Mayor Paul Johnson

Congratulations Sherry!!

Geographical Information Systems

Contact: Chris/Rachel B. Strom



SGRDC-GIS is working hard to make sure your investments in GIS are being used to benefit you in every way possible. With the 2010 Census getting closer, it's time to start thinking about how your geographic data can help with that daunting task. Preceding this next census count, there is a Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) initiative to ensure that the actual census is as accurate as possible. Here a few common questions and answers about the LUCA effort.

miss that meeting, the next workshop opportunity will be to take part in LUCA's technical training workshops between August and November of 2007.

Are there any upcoming deadlines? Yes. November 19, 2007 is the enrollment deadline for local governments wishing to participate in LUCA. After that, the RDC will begin to review and update the address list and return their comments to the Census Bureau's regional office. This work will be done between August 2007 and March 2008. During this period, you will be asked to participate.

What is LUCA? LUCA is a decennial census geographic partnership program that will allow the Census Bureau to benefit from local knowledge in developing its Master Address File (MAF) for the 2010 Census. This is an opportunity to improve the results of the census for your community and because it is a partnership, it depends on your participation to be a success!

What is SGRDC's role in this partnership? Regional Development Centers across Georgia are under contract with the Department of Community Affairs to fill key roles in the LUCA project. One role is to serve in a liaison capacity between the census bureau and local governments. Another role of RDCs is to actually proof and update the Master Address File (MAF). To accomplish this, SGRDC-GIS will be contacting you to acquire any address databases your community may have. This includes 911 addresses, water and sewer account databases and others between August 2007 and March 2008.

Why should my community participate? Aside from the clear benefit of having an accurate population count, the indirect benefits are: eligibility for federal grants, more accurate congressional representation and better community representation in all facets of the decennial census.

What's the first step in participation? The first step in participation of LUCA is attendance at the LUCA promotional workshop slated for April, 2007 at SGRDC. If you

What options do communities have for participation? **Option 1**— A full review allows communities to update their census maps and

Workforce Development

Contact: Marcia Gaskins

Georgia Workforce Leadership Association Holds Conference



The Georgia Workforce Leadership Association met in Cordele, GA on March 8-9, 2007. Pauline Council, the South Georgia Area Workforce Investment Board Chair, attended the conference. The Georgia Workforce Leadership Association (GWLA) is made up of all of the Chairs of every local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) in the state of Georgia. There are twenty Workforce Investment Areas in the state. The new Chair of the Georgia Workforce Leadership Association is Butch Jones, from Eljay, GA. Mr. Jones is the Chair of the Northwest Georgia Area Workforce Investment Board.

The major items discussed at the conference were the new Georgia Work Ready Program and pending Workforce Investment Act (WIA) legislative re-authorization. A representative from the Governor's office presented a presentation on the Work Ready Initiative, and Mark Musick, chair of the State Workforce Investment Board, discussed the State Workforce Board Strategic Plan. The GWLA members will draft a letter to federal legislators outlining local board's concerns with pending WIA legislation. WIA is currently operating under a continuing resolution until September 30, 2007.

Note: The South Georgia WIB can help people who have been laid off and are interested in receiving training in a demand occupation. For more information, contact Cathy Daniels (229-386-7461-Tifton area) or Nancy Fitzpatrick (229-333-7503-Valdosta area).

GIS continued...

update their census maps and their master address file. If you choose to participate digitally, we can help you perform these reviews.

Option 2 — Local gov't's provide their address databases to the census bureau for address matching and get to review and comment on the results. You will not be

able to update your census base maps.

Option 3— Local gov't's send their address lists to the census bureau and have no opportunity for review.

SGRDC-GIS will be working with the U.S. Census Bureau to develop accurate lists of addresses throughout our region.