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Marshall Conner, DCA Appointed Member
John L. Leonard, Executive Director



327 W. Savannah Avenue
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

REGIONAL CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

- ⇒ 20 JLUS Policy Committee Mtg.,RDC
- ⇒ 21 Staff Thanksgiving Luncheon
- ⇒ 25 Irwin County/Ocilla Comprehensive Partial Update Workshop
- ⇒ 27-28 Thanksgiving Holidays

DECEMBER

- ⇒ 4 Area City/County Clerks Tift Co. Host
- ⇒ 11 SGRDC & SEGRDC Joint Board Mtg., Nashville
- ⇒ 16 MPO Technical/Policy Committee, RDC
- ⇒ 19 Staff Christmas Luncheon
- ⇒ 25-26 Christmas Holidays

Don't forget! The annual Community Development Block Grant competition is coming up, and your South Georgia RDC staff is making preparations for this year's competition. Please call Andrea DeSantiago for more information at 333-5277.

in the REGION



NOVEMBER ■ 2008

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

Local Communities Receive Over \$1.2 Million for New Industries

The City of Fitzgerald was the recent recipient of \$326,347 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Employment Incentive Program funds. The public assistance will be used for public water, sewer, and road extensions for Agri-Products, a new industry that produces quality animal bedding for equine and swine. They use pure pine shavings from plantation wood-renewable resource timber suppliers.



Agri Products

Fitzgerald is to be the third location for the company; other plants are located in Thomasville, Georgia and Sheperd, Texas. Agri-Products ships its goods to retailers across the United States and worldwide, shipping to Dubai and other equine-rich areas.

The City of Quitman recently received \$500,000 in funding from the CDBG Employment Incentive Program fund for building improvements to an 80,000 square foot existing facility to benefit a new industry, Crown Health Care Laundry. Crown Laundry provides services

such as linen rental, linen management, internal distribution, on-premise laundry management, consulting and direct linen sales.

Crown also has existing facilities around the Southeast, including Selma, Alabama, Pensacola, Florida and Columbia, South Carolina. The Quitman, Georgia facility is to be the newest addition in Crown's 49 year history of customer service.



Crown Laundry Services

EDGE funding of \$375,000 was also granted to the Brooks County Development Authority to assist with building improvements for Crown Laundry. Crown Laundry will provide 140 full-time jobs to benefit people of low-to-moderate income in Brooks County.

Congratulations !

Tift County and the Municipalities of Tifton, Omega, and Ty Ty for the completion and adoption of their 2028 Comprehensive Plan and the Solid Waste Management Plan!

Information Technology Services

Contact: Vance Roberts

Ways to Help Maintain Your Computer

1. **Never, never, turn your computer off with the power switch until Windows has shut down.** The one exception to this rule is when your computer locks up and your hard drive is not running (hard drive light is not blinking). In this situation, you can turn the power off without harmful effects to the hard drive. Cutting the power can also result in lost of data or Windows files, so you should only do this when it is necessary.
2. **Backup, backup, backup,** any data you cannot afford to lose to at least two separate physical drives. So Backup data to external hard drives, Zip disks, CD-RWs etc. The time to backup is when you create anything you don't want to lose or can't afford to lose. Don't wait until tomorrow.
3. **Run Scandisk and Defragment at least once a month.** This will keep your hard drive healthy and prevent



4. **Never unplug peripherals from the computer when it is powered up.** Unplugging with the power on can short out the connector socket or the motherboard. The only exception to this rule is if you know a peripheral is "hot pluggable". If you do not know what "hot pluggable" means then ignore this exception.
5. **Do use a virus checker regularly.** Everyone should use a virus checker. The best type of protection is continuous monitoring from a dedicated anti-virus program like Norton Antivirus. The next best thing is use is the free online virus checkers such as Housecall provided by Trend Micro.
6. **Remove programs you no longer use or know about:** Over time, you may have installed games or utilities that you forgot about or no longer use. Why waste the space? Go to your control panel, Add/Remove programs and uninstall anything you no longer use. Occasionally you will find a toolbar or other item you were unaware was there!
7. **Keep track of the software disks you receive with your computer and new peripherals.** These disks contain valuable information and programs for Windows and are needed when Windows must be reloaded. Keep these disks and your Windows software disks in a safe, dry, place - - you never know when you will need them.

South Georgia Partnership for Regional Development

Job creation through entrepreneurship was the primary focus of the South Georgia Partnership for Regional Development (SGPRD) luncheon at the James H. Rainwater Conference Center recently. Members from chambers of commerce in Lowndes, Brooks, Lanier, Cook and Berrien counties, as well as South Georgia Regional Development Center professionals, area business owners, elected officials and other dignitaries, filled the conference room to identify common threads within the region that could translate into economic growth.

The keynote speaker, Georgia Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Mike Beatty, was introduced by Senator Tim Golden, D-Valdosta. Throughout his address, Beatty emphasized the importance of creating jobs and developing businesses through cooperative efforts. "Economic development is not a Democratic issue, nor is it a Republican issue," Beatty said. "It's everyone's issue." Beatty encouraged chamber professionals and county/city officials to promote the success of businesses by joining with entities from other counties and cities to work as a regional team. "Does all the work to promote economic growth come from Atlanta or Washington? No. By adopting philosophies that involve working from the bottom up, we are getting things done. We have to continue to work regionally." Beatty closed by stating that he has dedicated the next two years to traveling the state to "promote sustainable initiatives that will last past our time." The next SGPRD luncheon is scheduled to be held at the James H. Rainwater Conference Center on April 13, 2009. Keynote speaker will be Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce President Mike Gaymon, and the theme for the luncheon will be "Building Regional Economic Development Partnership: The Valley Partnership Story."



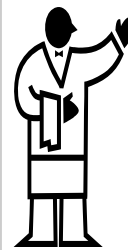
L-R John Leonard (Executive Director SGRDC), Ruth May, (Lanier County Chamber of Commerce), Myrna Ballard (Valdosta-Lowndes Chamber of Commerce), Mike Beatty (Commissioner, GA Dept of Community Affairs, and Jody Doss (owner, Jodi's Accessories, Valdosta).

Workforce Development

Contact: Marcia Gaskins

Workforce Development Offer The Following Program and Services

Workforce Development Programs are designed to provide training and/or education opportunities for adults, dislocated workers and economically disadvantaged youth. The mission of the Workforce Development Programs is to provide participants with the necessary skills to enable them to obtain and maintain gainful employment and increase their earning power, and to provide employers with a skilled labor force.



Programs and Services :

- * **Classroom Training** (Individual Training Accounts) at local technical colleges (WIA can help with expenses not covered by other financial aid)
- * **GED Preparation** classes in computer labs

located in Valdosta and Tifton (Technical College Instructors)

- * **Counseling** and case management services during training.
- * **Personal Career Planning** and Job Placement Assistance after training
- * **Childcare and Transportation** support payments are available for most training programs
- * **Youth Programs** (ages 16-21) which include GED Prep/High School Diploma classes (Technical College Instructors), Work Readiness Training, Work Experience and Individual Training Accounts at local Technical Colleges.
- * Funds specifically allocated for anyone who has been laid off from their job or is a displaced homemaker may be used for most of the above services.

Adult and youth funding is limited right now, but we do have dislocated worker funding available.

For additional information, contact the Tift Area Workforce Center at 229-386-7460 or Valdosta Career Center 229-245-2487.

John Elected Officer of National Association

John Leonard, Executive Director of South Georgia Regional Development Center, was elected to the position of Treasurer for the National Association of Development



John Leonard, Executive Director, SGRDC

Organizations (NADO) at their 41st Annual Business Meeting. As the SGRDC Executive Director, John is responsible for a staff of 50 supported by a \$6 million annual budget. Previously, he served as an Assistant Executive Director, Director of Loan Programs managing a \$6 million dollar revolving loan fund and a SBA Certified Development company, and Director of an award winning Planning and Community Development Department.

Prior experience includes Director of Economic Development and Planning at the Heart of Georgia Regional Development Center in Eastman.

John serves on the Board of Directors of the Southeastern Federal Credit Union and is currently the Chairman of the Board. John is a past President of the Georgia Association of RDCs and is a member of the Southeastern Regional Directors Institute (SERDI) Council of Peers. John is a graduate of Georgia State University and is a nationally certified Economic Development Finance Professional.

NADO serves the nation's 520 regional development organizations by promoting public policies that strengthen local governments, communities and economies through regional strategies, coordination efforts and program expertise.

NADO Executive Director Matt Chase says, "We are honored to have John Leonard serve as Treasurer of NADO. His wealth of knowledge, expertise and strong leadership will serve as valuable assets at the national level as we continue to promote the importance of regional economic development and the pivotal role that regional development organizations play in fostering regional collaboration, intergovernmental partnerships and strategic local investments."