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**REGIONAL CALENDAR**

**DECEMBER**

9 Council Mtg., Pearson  
12 Clerks Mtg., Lake Park  
21 Staff Luncheon, Homerville  
24-25 Christmas Holiday

**JANUARY**

1 New Year's Day Holiday  
13 Okefenokee Occasion, Atlanta  
18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday  
23-25 GMA, Atlanta  
26 RC Council Mtg., Pearson



November-December  
2009

Valdosta  
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www.sgrc.us

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

**Stand Up and Be Counted Georgia  
2010 Census working for you!**

The United States began conducting a census of population and housing in 1790. The U.S. Constitution, Article 1, Section 2 mandates an apportionment of representatives among the states for the House of Representatives every 10 years.

The census population total determines which states gain or lose representation in Congress. It also determines the amount of state and federal funding communities receive over the course of the decade. 2010 Census data will directly affect how more than \$4 trillion is allocated to local, state and tribal governments over the next 10 years. In order for this funding allocation to be accomplished fairly and accurately, the goal of the decennial census is to count everybody, count them only once, and count them in the right place. The facts gathered in the census also help shape decisions for the rest of the decade about public health, neighborhood improvements, transportation, education, senior services and much more.

The census impacts Southern Georgia in many ways:



- \* Annually the WIA Program receives more than one-third or over 3 million dollars of its funding based on population figures from the Census.
- \* Through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program communities in Southern Georgia received more than \$3.5 million through grants or entitlement funds in 2009.
- \* The Valdosta-Lowndes MPO annually receives 80% of its budgets or \$120,000 based on population data.
- \* The Southern Georgia Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Program budget is based on Census data. Annually over \$6.5 million is spent on Aging Services Programs throughout the area.



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Area Agency On Aging

Contact: Wanda Taft

**Southern Georgia RC Area Agency On Aging (AAA) Participates In 2009 Okefenokee Agricultural Fair**

Nothing has quite the same effect on a person's spirit as attending a local fair in the first cool weather of the year. In Waycross, the onset of fall coincides with the smell of onions sizzling on an open grill and the festive lights of midway rides as the Okefenokee Agricultural Fair returns to town.

This year, staff of the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) created a booth to promote services available through the agency's "Gateway to

Community Resources." Featuring a striking black and red theme, the booth offered fair patrons an open door to find out more about programs and services available to older adults and persons with disabilities in Southern Georgia.



Polly Wilson, Screening Specialist, and Marie Hiers, Resource Specialist, designed the booth and manned it during fair hours, along with other members of the AAA Gateway staff. Visitors were given flyers and brochures about services including home delivered meals, the

elderly legal assistance program, the Community Care Services Program (CCSP), respite, and other vital programs. Booth volunteers also spent time with the public outlining the steps involved in "Intake and Assistance," the process of applying for help from various community programs.

According to Laura Sapp, RN, Gateway Supervisor, "The Okefenokee Fair is a perfect opportunity to familiarize residents of Waycross and surrounding areas with what the AAA Gateway offers and how people in need can go about receiving assistance through our office."

The 2009 Okefenokee Agricultural Fair ran from November 10 through November 14 and included midway rides, local entertainment, concessions, games, livestock shows, booths from community companies and agencies, and many other exciting attractions.

Community & Economic Development

Contact: Sherry Davidson

**10th Annual Conservation Production Systems Training Conference Set**

Farmers and interested persons can learn about the benefits of conservation tillage at the "10th Annual Conservation Production Systems Training Conference" set for Tuesday and Wednesday, February 2 - 3, 2010 at the South Georgia Technical College in Americus, Georgia. The conference is designed for farmers to discuss and learn about conservation production systems from other farmers, USDA

and UGA personnel, and researchers in an interactive setting.

This conference promotes a "Systems Approach" to sustainable agriculture and conservation tillage. Topics to be covered in concurrent breakout sessions include Increase of Wildlife with Whole Farm Conservation, Cattle Grazing, Sod-Based Rotations and Conservation Tillage, How to Manage Cover Crops, Weeds in Conservation Tillage, Carbon Sequestration, Carbon Credits and Carbon Markets and an opportunity to tour the Caterpillar Training Facility. Additionally, educational displays related to



conservation tillage will be on display. The conference registration fee per person is \$200 excluding lodging and \$275 per person including lodging. Farmers may be eligible for scholarships to cover registration fees if registered by the deadline of January 14, 2010 and as long as funds are available. Vendors, Equipment Dealers, and other Agriculture Supply Dealers are welcome to set up product displays for a small fee. Lodging will be at the Windsor Hotel. Scholarships are available for farmers!

For more information or to register for the 2010 Conservation Productions Systems Training Conference, please contact Karen McBrayer at (229) 386-3416 or by email at [karens@uga.edu](mailto:karens@uga.edu). Registration can also be completed online at [www.ugatiftonconference.org](http://www.ugatiftonconference.org) under Upcoming Events.

Workforce Investment

Contact: Marcia Gaskins/Cindy Eblin

**Tift County Youth Complete Work Readiness Class**

Tift County WIA Youth Program participants completed a Work Readiness class on November 20, 2009. The class was held at the Tift Area Workforce Center in Tifton, GA. The (Paxen, Inc.) Work Readiness Class curriculum facilitates the acquisition of life, academic, and employability skills. Youth are encouraged to re-engage in secondary school and obtain their high school diploma. Pre-employment/work maturity skills, i.e., job

search, completing applications, resumes, interviewing skills, appropriate behavior and attire, self esteem, goal setting, time and stress management are included in the curriculum, in addition to career exploration. Topics are practice-oriented and activity-based. Business volunteers are invited to speak to the class about the hiring process, and students make on-site visits to area employers to explore different careers and observe how businesses operate.

Upon successful completion of the program, the youth participate in a graduation ceremony. The youth received a certificate and a motivational speaker addressed the class. The Tift Area Workforce Center WIA Work Readiness Class members are pictured below-congratulations to the graduates!



Front Row-L-R: Simiya Neloms; Tyeshia Milton; Instructor-Olga White; AnDreanna Bryant; Amber Stone; Brandie Long; Speaker-Mary Traylor.

Back Row-L-R: Jeremy Brown; Josh Atkinson; Amanda Barnes; Josh Hightower.

Not pictured: Maria Arteaga and Roxanne Wood.

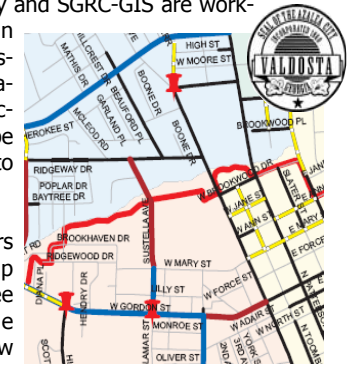
Geographic Information Systems

Contact: Chris Strom

**SGRCs Online Mapping Makes Local Governments Plans Easily Accessible**

As you drive, walk and bike across your community this Christmas season, it may never cross your mind that the infrastructure beneath you requires diligent maintenance and sometimes improvement to keep your travel across town efficient, safe and smooth. Like many communities, the City of Valdosta maintains plans for these improvements and new for this year is a way for citizens to access these plans and their details through the internet.

In an effort to help keep their citizens more informed of these plans, the schedules for improvements and how transportation dollars are being spent, the City and SGRC-GIS are working to construct and rollout an interactive website that illustrates the location of transportation improvements. This interactive mapping website will be available in the next month to Valdosta citizens.



On this public website, visitors will be able to search the map by type of improvement, see start/end locations of the planned work, and even view detailed drawings and plans. The map to the right illustrates a portion of planned improvements across the city and is similar to how the interactive map will appear.

This project is just one example of how GIS can be used to help your city or county to work more openly and provide information to its citizens. Using web-based GIS mapping tools, these types of web mapping projects are relatively easy to accomplish for any community. Because SGRC has all the hardware, software, and know-how, these types of projects can be completed quickly and at little expense to the government. If you have an idea for making your community's data accessible through an online web map, give us a call. We're happy to discuss possibilities.

**Get Lost?** Although having GIS data and tools on your desktop computer is a great tool because you can interact with it and ask questions, there are times that it's impractical and all you really need is a printed map. Because of that, SGRC-GIS offers services to create customized maps of any scale and size. If you need a map book and index for your emergency response, we can help. If you need an extra large wall map of your community with aerial photography, parcels, zoning, or any other layer, we can do that too.

In the works right now is a brand new road atlas for Brantley County to support their 911 responders and other county staff. This atlas will illustrate a variety of layers in 11x17 format and have an index that helps the user to locate streets easily!

Information Technology Services

Contact: Vance Roberts

**WARNING!! Internet Pirates are Trying To Steal Your Personal Financial Information**

Here's the Good News You have the Power to Stop Them — In a typical case, you'll receive an e-mail that appears to come from a reputable company that you recognize and do business with, such as your financial institution. In some cases, the e-mail may appear to come from a government agency, including one of the federal financial institution regulatory agencies.

The e-mail will probably warn you of a serious problem that requires your immediate attention. It may use phrases, such as "Immediate attention required," or "Please contact us immediately about your account." The e-mail will then encourage you to click on a button to go to the institution's Web site.



In a phishing scam, you could be redirected to a phony Web site that may look exactly like the real thing. Sometimes, in fact, it may be the company's actual Web site. In those cases, a pop-up window will quickly appear for the purpose of harvesting your financial information. In either case, you may be asked to update your account information or to provide information for verification purposes: your Social Security number, your account number, your password, or the information you use to verify your identity when speaking to a real financial institution, such as your mother's maiden name or your place of birth.

If you provide the requested information, you may find yourself the victim of identity theft.

**How to Protect Yourself**

- 1. Never provide your personal information in response to an unsolicited request,** whether it is over the phone or over the Internet. E-mails and Internet pages created by phishers may look exactly like the real thing. They may even have a fake padlock icon that ordinarily is used to denote a secure site. If you did not initiate the communication, you should not provide any information.
- 2. If you believe the contact may be legitimate, contact the financial institution yourself.** You can find phone numbers and Web sites on the monthly statements you receive from your financial institution, or you can look the company up in a phone book or on the Internet. The key is that you should be the one to initiate the contact, using contact information that you have verified yourself.
- 3. Never provide your password over the phone or in response to an unsolicited Internet request.** A financial institution would never ask you to verify your account information online. Thieves armed with this information and your account number can help themselves to your savings.
- 4. Review account statements regularly to ensure all charges are correct.** If your account statement is late in arriving, call your financial institution to find out why. If your financial institution offers electronic account access, periodically review activity online to catch suspicious activity.