



Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

REGIONAL NEWS

VOL. 24 ISSUE 1

DOTHAN, ALABAMA 36302

WWW.SEARPCDC.ORG

FALL 2011

“SCSEP Does Real Work.”

Senior Community Service Employment Program

Asked what she most valued about her senior workers, Ms. Altha Newman’s response was “...maturity and reliability, not to mention the fact that they are always on time, if not 15 minutes early each day.” Ms. Newman’s comments were made on September 16, 2011, at a Congressional briefing in Washington, D.C., co-sponsored by the Gerontological Society of America and the American Society on Aging. The briefing was moderated by Tony Sarmiento, executive director of Senior Service America Inc. (SSAI), one of SEARP&DC’s funders. The goal of the briefing was to call attention to the impact of the recession on older workers; highlight the multiple return of public dollars invested through SCSEP and promote awareness of the increasing need for SCSEP across the nation. “Older workers have a lot to offer in the workplace” stated Ms. Newman. “In a child-focused environment, older workers provide balance and often serve as role models to the younger generation.”



Pictured L to R: Barbara Knight, SEARP&DC Senior Employment Program Director; Mike Albares, Representative Martha Roby’s Office; and Altha Newman, Executive Director of Hawk Houston Boys & Girls Club.

At the briefing, Sarmiento stated “Our nation can ill afford to overlook the record levels of joblessness among older Americans. Providing jobs and training, especially to those with less income and education, helps older adults stay healthy and independent as well as helps meet our nation’s workforce demands.”



Congressional briefing speakers Pictured L to R: Tony Sarmiento, SSAI Executive Director; Altha Newman-Executive Director of Hawk-Houston Boys & Girls Club; Laura Spiecker-former SCSEP participant, Cookeville, TN; Dennis Streets, Director NC Division of Aging and Adult Services, Raleigh, NC; Andrew Sum-Director, Center for Labor Market Studies, Boston, MA.

The Washington briefing was one of several activities coordinated by SEARP&DC during the month of September in support of a nation-wide awareness campaign initiated by SCSEP sponsor Senior Service America, Inc. entitled “SCSEP Does Real Work.” Following the briefing, Mr. Sarmiento, Ms. Newman, and Project Director Barbara Knight met with Congressional staff of Senators Shelby and Sessions and Representative Martha Roby.

On August 18, Executive Director Tom Solomon and Project Director Barbara Knight, organized an event that blended presentation, videos, and host agency testimonials in a gathering for staff from the offices of U.S. Senators Richard Shelby and Jeff Sessions and U.S. Representative Martha Roby. The group visited the Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center where they spoke with Dr. Jack Sasser, Administrator; Dave Coleman, Supervisor and participant Helen Daniels about

continued on page 8

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Executive Committee

Jay Jaxon **BARBOUR**

Roy Hill Sr.*
Rebecca Beasley
Earl Gilmore
W. Roy Crow*
Henry Franklin, Alternate

Al Britt **COFFEE**

Paul Russell
Mickey Murdock
Gladys Yelverton
Robert Stephens*, Immediate Past Chairman
Ross Cotter, Alternate

Bernard Stewart **COVINGTON**

Sammy Glover*
David Lindsey
David Ellis
Jason Jewell
Greg White, Alternate

Billy Blackwell **DALE**

Wess Etheredge*, Chairman
Eunice Hagler
Julie Jones*, 2nd Vice Chairperson
Kurt McDaniel
Dianne Marshall, Alternate

Rob Hinson **GENEVA**

William Birdsong
Gwen Bruner
Fred Hamic*, Secretary/ Treasurer
Michael Langford
Vann Bradshaw, Alternate
William J. Paul, Ex Officio/Legal Counsel

Gregory Reynolds **HENRY**

Carl Bush
Henry Grimsley
JoAnn Smith
Mary Ethel Williams*
John Glover, Alternate

Matt Parker **HOUSTON**

Mark Culver*, 1st Vice Chairman
Lori Wilcoxon
Charles Dismuke
Mike Schmitz
Tol Dozier, Alternate

STAFF -

Thomas B. Solomon-Executive Director;

Economic Development - Emily Waters, Director; Rachel Armstrong; Glenda Chancey

Community Development - Scott Farmer, Director; Andrew Windham; Glenda Chancey

Head Start - Ron Holliman, Director; Martha Lisenby; Pat Nobles; Stephanie

Dawsey; Jackie Daniels; Brandi Wallace

Senior Employment - Barbara Knight,

Director; Richard Devore

Wiregrass Transit - John Sorrell, Director;

Tony Knight; Roberta Simmons; Lisa Stuttard

Fiscal Department - Faye Moring, Director;

Mark Williams; Natalie Cook; Sharon Barry;

Eleanor Flippo

Penny Rotolo, Human Resources

Sarah Hesters, Information Technology



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Thomas B. Solomon

At this writing, the U.S. Congress is working to finalize the FY 2012 Transportation, Housing and Urban

Development, and Related Agencies (T-HUD) appropriations bill. One of the most important components of this bill is the final funding level for the HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. It is critical that Congress maintain adequate funding for this important community and economic development program that provides funds for a wide range of urgently needed development activities for small and medium sized communities and counties across the U.S.

In 2003, the CDBG formula allocation was funded at \$4.36 billion. Since then, formula funding has been steadily decreasing, including a five percent cut in FY 2005, a ten percent cut in FY 2006 and a three percent cut in FY 2008. The CDBG program was funded at \$3.99 billion under the FY 2010 Omnibus Appropriations measure (H.R. 3288).

In September, the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development approved a FY 2012 appropriations bill that funds the CDBG program at \$3.5 billion, a \$165 million increase over the current FY 2011 level of \$3.34 billion. However, also in September, the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee passed their version of the bill that included only \$2.85 billion for CDBG, a nearly \$485 million reduction over current funding. This cut is in addition to the \$600 million cut CDBG sustained in FY 2011, which would result in an approximately **38%** reduction in CDBG funding in the past two years.

The CDBG program is an important development tool for our regional non-entitlement communities and

county governments and is used to tackle their most serious challenges, such as providing affordable housing, upgrading and building essential public infrastructure such as water and sanitary sewer systems, creating small business development loan funds for local entrepreneurs and industries, and addressing local planning and technical assistance needs. At a time when local regional governments and communities are striving to overcome intensifying global economic competition, upgrade aging public infrastructure and deal with the severe housing crisis, it is vital that Federal policy makers continue to maintain support for the CDBG program.

The cornerstone of the CDBG program is its locally driven, flexible and bottom-up approach. The program provides invaluable resources for 1,180 urban entitlement counties and cities to meet locally identified community development needs, yet it also reserves more than \$1 billion annually for states to assist rural communities through the small cities program managed by the states.

According to HUD, over 95 percent of FY 2008 funding went to activities principally benefiting low and moderate income persons. HUD estimates CDBG projects assisted over 149,000 households, helped to create or retain more than 31,000 jobs and provided vital public services to over 26 million individuals.

State, regional and local officials use the CDBG program to provide valuable seed capital, gap financing and core support for a variety of beneficial projects. More importantly, CDBG funds are typically used to leverage and attract private sector investments. Every dollar of the CDBG program invested in communities is leveraged by three dollars in private funding, bringing much needed business investments, employment

Rural Planning Organization Assists Regional Officials with Transportation Planning Issues

The Southeast Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO) exists to serve as a resource on transportation issues for local officials and transportation leaders. SEARP&DC serves as the administrator and facilitator for the RPO and has had an active year assisting local governments with their rural planning efforts. The RPO consists of two committees, Policy and Technical that meets twice a year to discuss regional transportation issues. The Policy Committee is the official decision making body of the RPO and consists mainly of Mayors and County Commissioners from each county within the region. The Technical Committee is comprised of county engineers from each county in the region and serves as a technical resource and an advisory body to the Policy Committee. Before the Policy and Technical committee meetings, public hearings are held in each county in the region. These citizens meetings provide an important opportunity for citizens to comment on transportation issues within their county and region.

This year the RPO has been active in assisting local governments with transportation planning issues. During the RPO public meetings held throughout the region, information and comments are collected from citizens and presented to local officials during Policy and Technical committee meetings. This information is important to local officials in keeping informed of transportation issues that are important to the citizens they serve. The Technical committee also plays an important role in transportation planning for local officials. During Technical Committee meetings, county engineers and public works directors gather to discuss transportation issues facing their counties and municipalities. These Technical committee meetings serve as a forum

for the county engineer and public works directors to gather and discuss pertinent issues and problems that they face every day on a local level. Public works directors and county engineers are not the only technical experts represented at these meetings.

Representatives from Fort Rucker's Garrison Command are present at the

officials to comment on the HSCTP update. Local officials recognize the importance of providing quality transportation to these important stakeholders and the RPO is proud to have been an important link between local officials and other transportation providers through the HSCTP.

On August 24-26, Andrew Windham,



Technical and Policy committee meetings. Attendance by Fort Rucker officials presents an opportunity for local officials and Fort Rucker officials to communicate with each other and share common concerns and issues in order to improve this important partnership.

Recently, staff members from Wiregrass Transit and the RPO worked together to complete the five-year update to the regional Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan (HSCTP). The HSCTP is a consolidated planning document that aims to coordinate transportation issues between social service providers and other transportation stakeholders within the region. During the Policy and Technical committee meetings, an opportunity was provided for local

transportation planner, for the Southeast Alabama RPO was given the chance to participate in the National Transportation Peer Learning Conference in Washington, D.C. This conference provided an important opportunity for transportation planners around the country to network and share ideas in order to more effectively manage transportation dollars. Many important topics were discussed at the conference. Despite an earthquake at the beginning of the week and a hurricane at the end of the week, everyone learned a lot and had a good time!

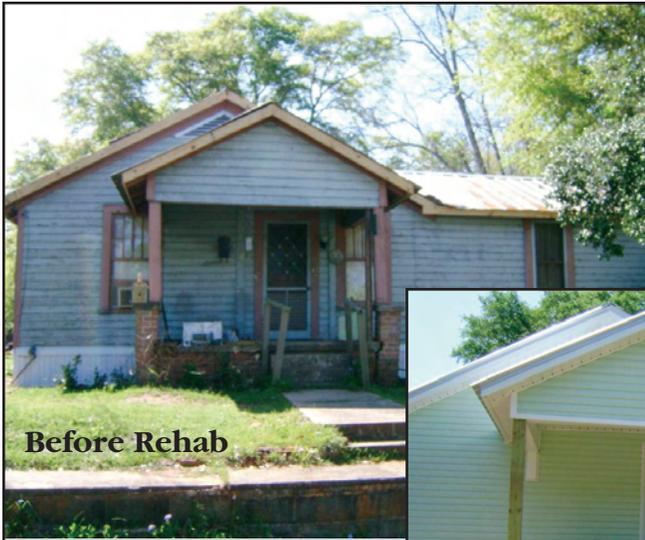


**Andrew Windham,
Regional Planner**

Andrew can be reached at: 334-794-4093 ext. 1409 or awindham@searpc.org

“Helping People, Changing Lives”

City of Ozark CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization Project



Before Rehab

In 2009, the city of Ozark received a Community Development Block Grant of \$488,476 for the purpose of implementing a neighborhood revitalization project on the east and west sides of the South Union Avenue corridor that leads into downtown Ozark. “We want to make Ozark a better place to live by promoting safe, decent, and appropriate housing for low to moderate income families,” stated Mayor Billy Blackwell. Implementation has included the resurfacing of six streets, demolishing of two dilapidated structures and housing rehabilitation of sixteen homes to date. “These grants help those that can’t do the repairs on their own,” according to Jonathan Cordell, Ozark Building Official. “Many have had floors that were soft and on the verge of falling through or had electrical problems. This funding helps



Emily Waters, Economic Development Director
Emily can be reached at 334-794-4093 ext. 1414 or ewaters@searpdc.org



After Rehab



After Rehab

tance. The improvements to her home included new insulated windows, sheetrock repairs, new water heater and more. Ms. Crouch stated, “Not only has my house become more energy efficient, but the improvements have beautified it as well.” Another recipient, Ms. Rhodie McClendon, is a single mom of a disabled child and works as a Home Health Aide at night. Ms. McClendon’s home was in

bring those homes up to code.” Ms. Laura Crouch was a recent recipient of Housing Rehabilitation assis-

desperate need of repair and she, along with generous church members, was able to raise her 10% homeowner match in order to rehabilitate her home. She stated, “I could have never, ever done this without help from the city and the grant and my church family!”

Mayor Billy Blackwell added, “This project has made a tremendous impact. If not for these funds, many of these homeowners would continue to live in substandard housing. This grant is bringing these neighborhoods together and encouraging neighborhood revitalization.”

This project like so many others would not have been possible without the Community Development Block Grant program. CDBG funding continues to help people, change lives, and make our communities better places to live.



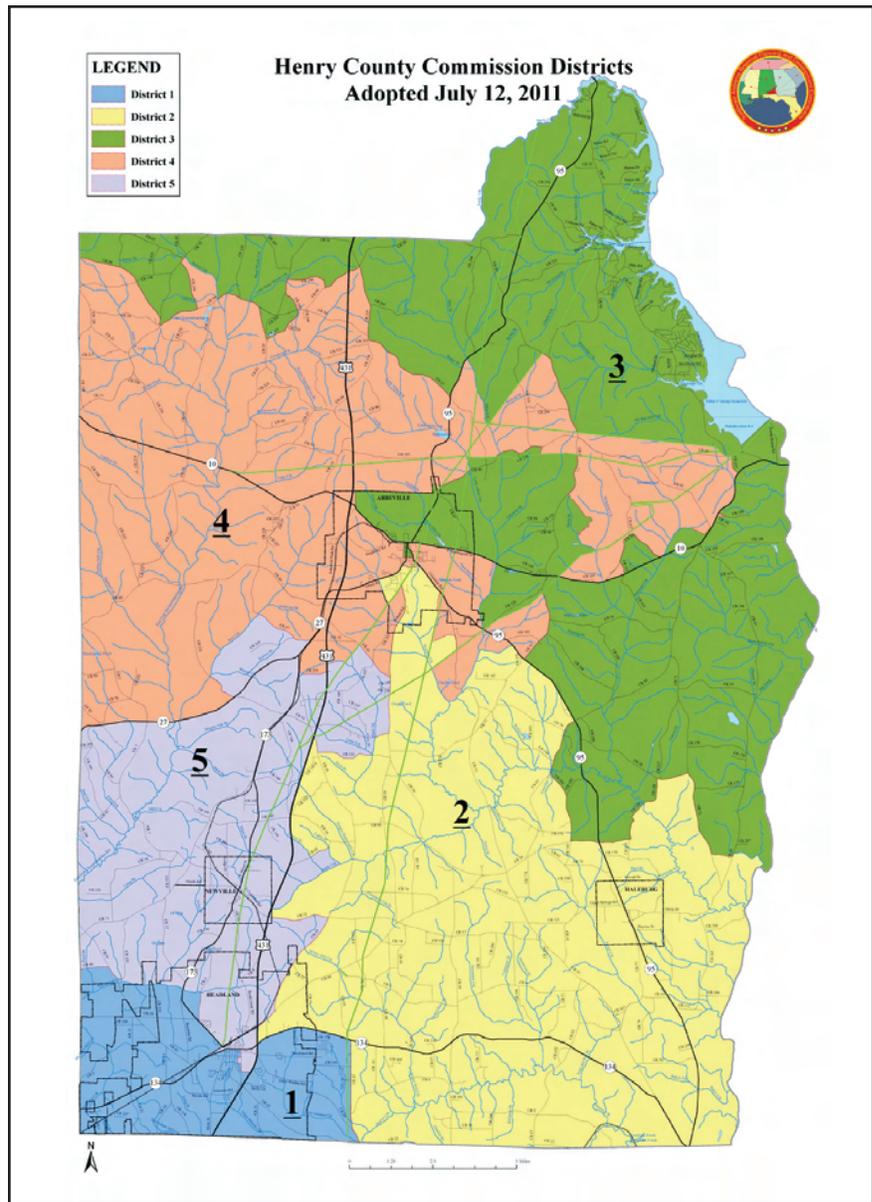
Before Rehab

SEARP&DC Facilitating Local Government Redistricting

Scott Farmer, SEARP&DC Community Development Director, provided technical assistance to several regional local governments in the political redistricting process. The redistricting process involves altering the geographic boundaries of voting districts to have an almost equal number of people in each district. The *Code of Alabama* provides statutory guidance for the redistricting process for municipalities, counties, and boards of education. Local governments that utilize single-member districts in electing officials should review their districts to assess the need for redistricting. For local governments with at-large districts, redistricting is not a concern.

Local governments with single-member districts must review their district composition after the release of decennial census data. Traditionally, courts have allowed up to a 10% deviation between the population of the most populous district and the least populous district. If the districts have a greater deviation, then they should go through the redistricting process. Local governments must also consider the voting strength of minority populations as well. SEARP&DC has utilized 2010 Census data with the ESRI ArcGIS software in order to conduct demographic analysis and map development in support of the redistricting process.

Once the local governments have gone through the public participation requirements and adopt the changes, information pertaining to the redistricting process must be submitted to the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division for a review and preclearance of the voting changes prior to elections that will utilize the newly adopted districts. The redistricting plan adopted by the Henry County



Commission and the Henry County Board of Education recently received their Preclearance Letter from the U.S. Department of Justice.

SEARP&DC is assisting the following local governments with their redistricting process (either through a demographic analysis or through the entire process): City of Abbeville, City of Andalusia, City of Florala, City of Geneva, Geneva County Commission, Geneva County Board of Education,

City of Headland, Henry County Commission, Henry County Board of Education, Town of Midland City, and City of Opp.



**Scott Farmer, AICP
Community
Development Director**

Scott can be reached at
334-794-4093 ext. 1412
or
sfarmer@searpc.org

Federal Head Start Program on the Road to School Readiness

Head Start Programs were reauthorized by the *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act* that set revised standards and specific learning goals. As Head Start Programs have received considerable media attention in regard to the effectiveness in preparing children to succeed in public schools, it is appropriate to examine our current program services as it relates to school readiness. In order to better prepare our Head Start children for public school we have made a number of changes.

The SEARP&DC Head Start Program began the current school year with a new curriculum that provides a common learning framework with current public school Pre-K standards. We changed to the *Creative Curriculum* that provides an early learning framework. This framework contains the following learning domains:

Language Development:

Listening and Understanding: *Creative Curriculum* provides teachers with lessons and activities to offer children the opportunities for conversation, stories, songs and poems.

Speaking and Communicating:

Interaction is a key component in *Creative Curriculum* which provides opportunities to develop skills for receptive and expressive communication.

Literacy:

Phonological Awareness: *Creative Curriculum* integrates phonemic skills throughout the language arts lessons. Letter sounds and patterns are emphasized every day in many ways and with a variety of letters and words.

Book Knowledge and Appreciation: *Creative Curriculum* creates a literature rich environment

for the children. Many art projects, songs and science activities begin by reading books.

Print Awareness: Teachers use books, real-life literature such as newspapers, nonfiction text, maps and more, and encourages the development of print awareness.

Early Writing: *Creative Curriculum* supports early preschool writing and provides opportunities for the children to experiment with writing.

Alphabet Knowledge: Preschool children build on the letters and letter sounds that they know each and every day using both functional and



fun words together!

Mathematics:

Number & Operations: Each thematic unit has specialized math activities and lessons that teachers implement regularly so that the skills become familiar and imbedded.

Geometry & Spatial Sense: This area of learning is developed throughout the entire curriculum system, from activities and lessons, to games and learning centers. Even science and social studies activities promote spatial awareness in the use of maps and murals.

Patterns & Measurement: Teachers demonstrate measurements on a regular and ongoing basis beyond the math lessons.

Science:

Scientific Skills & Methods: Science skills are the cornerstone to educational success. Teaching one to ask questions and then find solutions enables children the ability to find and gain information.

Creative Arts:

Art: Head Start children have a variety of formats to express their artistic skill and development through arts and craft projects and lessons. Some are teacher-guided, but many are child-initiated that promote that natural creativity within each child.

Social & Emotional Development:

Self-Concept reinforces key components of "self" and how children fit in with society. Various activities build self-concept since they provide opportunities for each child to feel successful and able to contribute no matter what their developmental age.

Self-Control: Opportunities are provided to practice and utilize self-control. Teachers model and teach ways to wait their turn, use materials responsibly and demonstrate the cause and effect of their actions.

Cooperation: As children often work best when in cooperative learning environments, problem-solving skills and activities are imbedded throughout the curriculum to build these skills.

Social Relationships: Through building cooperation, one develops social relationships. Activities and lessons are provided to promote peer relationships.

next page

Approaches to Learning:

Initiative & Curiosity: Children need chances to explore and investigate the world around them.

Engagement & Persistence: encourages repetition and changing the duration of themes to help children get more deeply involved and engaged with information and materials.

Reasoning & Problem-Solving: Essentially connected with science, social studies and mathematics, these cognitive areas are necessary and tied together to promote reasoning and problem-solving skills.

Physical Health & Development:

Fine Motor Skills: Teachers help Head Start children develop these skills through activities and lessons in arts and crafts, language, mathematic, and more! Both structured and unstructured learning environments are filled with ways to develop these skills.

Gross Motor Skills: The curriculum provides lesson ideas for games and fingerplays and songs which are designed to develop preschool children's gross motor skills.

These learning domains and others provide a consistent alignment with public school learning framework that will facilitate the transition of Head Start children to public school kindergarten. In summation, Head Start creates a learning environment that supports children's growth in language, literacy, mathematics, science, social and emotional functioning, creative arts, physical skills and approaches to learning. Head Start promotes school readiness by providing low-income children and their families' health, educational, nutritional, and social services.



**Ron Holliman,
Head Start Program
Director**

Ron can be reached at 334-794-4093 ext.1404

Regional Coordinated Transportation Planning

The Southeast Alabama Regional Planning & Development Commission has been deeply involved in transportation and transit planning for the region. We have just concluded our planning effort and an update of the existing Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan for this region.

Over the past twelve months, we coordinated with local agencies and governments to further refine and update our original plan. As you may recall, as we developed our initial plan we came to two major conclusions: the spirit of cooperation and coordination is alive and well, and the lack of funding seriously limits any expansion of transit or public transportation into the surrounding areas. Based on our analysis of 2010 census data and a review of all of the inputs that we received, we determined that very little had changed in the region and that all of our original findings were still valid.

A copy of the plan is available for viewing on the SEARP&DC website, www.searpc.org/DataCenter.htm. If you are familiar with our previous plans, you will note that the format of this plan has changed significantly. We hope that this new format makes the plan easier for everyone to use.

The availability of resources continues to be a significant issue and hurdle. We understand this but hope that,

through this process, we can find areas where coordination and cooperation will allow us to better use the limited resources that we have.

As we progress and further develop this plan we welcome all comments, ideas, suggestions and participation from any and everyone in the region that has concerns about public transportation. We will continue to solicit the participation of key individuals, groups and agencies throughout this process.

If you wish to participate, or if you wish to share your ideas or suggestions, please contact John Sorrell at Wiregrass Transit Authority. John may be reached by telephone at (334) 794-4093 or by e-mail at jsorrell@searpc.org. You may also contact Mr. Scott Farmer at (334) 794-4093 or by email at sfarmer@searpc.org.

There are no easy solutions to providing coordinated public transportation in the region. To be successful, it will require significant hard work, coordination and commitment from all of the local governments and agencies involved. The good news is that we can implement portions of the plan one piece at a time as the resources are identified. The staff of your Planning Commission is ready to assist in this implementation or others deemed important to our regional towns, cities and counties.



**John Sorrell
WTA Manager**

John can be reached at 334-794-4093 ext. 1431 or transit@searpc.org.

Continued from front page

the valuable contribution of SCSEP participants to the mission of the agency. Commented Dr. Sasser, "Our older workers do a great job and we are proud to have them here at WRC."

During their August 18 visit, Congressional Aides were invited to attend a meeting of Henry and Houston County participants scheduled for September 14, 2011. Congressional Aide Lindsey Grubbs representing Senator Jeff Sessions attended the meeting and commended the group for the services they are providing in their communities.

Said Ms. Knight, "I am so thankful that representatives of our elected officials took the time to learn more about SCSEP. I believe what they learned will have a great impact because they now understand that organizations such as Hawk-Houston Boys and Girls Club and Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center depend on the real and important work performed

by SCSEP participants." SEARP&DC administers SCSEP through grants received from Senior Service America and the Alabama Department of Senior Services.



Pictured is Barbara Knight and Altha Newman in front of the Capitol



Pictured to the above is Lindsey Grubbs (Senator Sessions office) with participant Ruth Lawrence.

Pictured to the left back row: is Dr. Jack Sasser, WRC Administrator; Dave Coleman, WRC Director of Program Services; Brad Wilson (Senator Shelby's Office); middle row Cecelia Meeks (Senator Sessions); SCSEP participant Helen Daniels; Lindsey Grubbs (Senator Sessions); Lori Ward (Rep. Martha Roby); front row WRC consumer Joshua McInnish.



.....
**Energy Efficiency and Conservation
Block Grant Program Grants Announced**

The City of Ozark was awarded \$250,000 from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program to perform energy efficiency retrofits in the East Gate Business Park. The East Gate Business Park is a small business technology center (incubator). The grant improved energy efficiency in the building by providing individual meters that have the ability to heat and cool each room individually.

The Houston County Commission was awarded \$250,000 from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program to perform lighting retrofits in Houston County owned buildings. The buildings retrofitted included the Health Department, Farm

Extension Office, Court House, Community Corrections Facility, County Administration Building, and Department of Human Resources.

City of Headland was awarded \$53,240 from the EECBG program for the purpose of performing retrofits to the City Hall and City Library to improve energy efficiency. The improvements include replacing weather stripping on exterior doors, installing timers on the water heater, installing motion sensor light switches, replacing the incandescent bulbs with cfl bulbs, purchasing and installing new HVAC units, resealing air ducts, installing digital thermostats, installing insulation in attic, installing solar film on windows, and retrofitting light fix-

tures.

Barbour County was awarded \$65,343 to install energy efficient windows in the county courthouse in Clayton. The windows are tinted and double-paned to retain more cool air in the summer and warm air in the winter.

City of Opp was awarded \$34,500 to install double-paned windows in the city hall and replace three heat pumps with more efficient models.

SEARP&DC assisted all grantees with these grants. For assistance with your grant writing needs please contact the Community/Economic Development departments of the Southeast Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission 334-794-4093.

SEARP&DC 2011 Annual Regional Meeting



Another successful Annual meeting was held on September 22, 2011 at the Daleville Convention Center in Daleville. Alabama Lieutenant Governor Kay Ivey was the Guest Speaker. Over 200 Regional elected officials and community leaders attended. A special thanks to all of our sponsors that made the evening such a success: AngelTrax Bus Video, RouteMatch Software Inc, Pea River Electric Cooperative, Covington Electric Cooperative, Wiregrass Electric Cooperative, South Alabama Electric Cooperative, CDG Engineers, Alabama Power Company, Southeast Alabama Gas District, BBVA Compass Bank, Alabama Municipal Insurance Corporation., Polyengineering, Inc., Praestare Engineering, NorthStar Engineering, National Bus Sales & Leasing, David Hicks & Associates, Covington County Economic Development, DMD Engineers, Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, Goodwyn, Mills & Cawood Inc., and Power South Cooperative.



.....
Page 2 Continued

opportunities and the chance for a fresh start to distressed areas. In reality, CDBG funds are a return on the investment of federal funds and for this reason should be adequately funded by Congress.

Historically numerous development projects right here in our seven county region in Southeast Alabama have been funded via the CDBG program benefiting thousands of regional residents. If you ask any regional Mayor, councilmember, County Commissioner, economic or community developer and community leader, they will quickly cite many reasons why the CDBG program has vastly improved the quality of life for the residents within their area.

As an elected official, community

leader or regional resident, your strong voice is needed to maintain the CDBG program funding at a level that will continue to make a difference in regional communities in Southeast Alabama and across this nation. Contact members of the U.S. Senate and House Appropriations Committees and urge them to continue to adequately fund the CDBG program. I urge you to express your support of the CDBG program, by calling those from Alabama who serve on the Appropriations Committee in Congress and leaving a message of your strong support to maintain funding for this vital resource for our region, state and nation. Contact information is: Senator Richard Shelby (202) 224-5744, Congressman Robert B. Aderholt (202) 225-4876 and Congressman Jo Bonner (202) 225-4931.

Regional Commission Executive Directors Meet with Governor Robert Bentley



The Alabama Association of Regional Councils Executive Directors met recently with Alabama Governor Robert Bentley at the State Capitol to discuss issues affecting Alabama's regions and how the regions can best work with his administration. A number of ongoing and planned initiatives were discussed and Governor Bentley committed his administration's cooperation in delivering program resources from the State through the regional commissions to continue to provide benefits to regional citizens. Pictured with Governor Bentley are L-R: Neal Morrison, Decatur; Charles Ball, Birmingham; Bill Curtis, Anniston; Keith Jones, Muscle Shoals; Greg Clark, Montgomery; John Clyde Riggs, Camden; Tyson Howard, Montgomery; Russ Wimberly, Mobile; Bob Culver, Huntsville; Suzanne Burnette, Opelika and Tom Solomon, Dothan.

SEARP&DC Board Member Recognized

Retiring SEARP&DC Board member, Don McLeod, CPA is at left shown receiving a plaque in appreciation for his service on the Board from SEARP&DC Executive Director, Tom Solomon. Mr. McLeod stated, "I have thoroughly enjoyed my time serving on the SEARP&DC Board and wish the agency all the best".



"Legislator of the Year Award"

The Alabama Association of Regional Councils presented former House Speaker Seth Hammett of Andalusia with its 2010 "Legislator of the Year Award" at the Alabama Development Office in Montgomery where he served as ADO Director. Mr. Hammett is now serving as Vice President of Business Development with PowerSouth Cooperative. Pictured with former Speaker Seth Hammett L-R are AARC Executive Directors: Tyson Howard, Bob Lake, Charles Ball, John Clyde Riggs, Thomas Solomon, Suzanne Burnette, Bob Culver, Keith Jones, and Bill Tucker.

SEARP&DC Welcomes new Board Members



Mr. Roy Hill, Sr., Barbour County. Married to Florine Hill, three children, Angel, Roy Jr. and Candace. Owns and operates R&F Furniture, Pre-Paid Legal Services and U-Haul Rental agency in Eufaula. Pastor of Repentance Church in Eufaula.



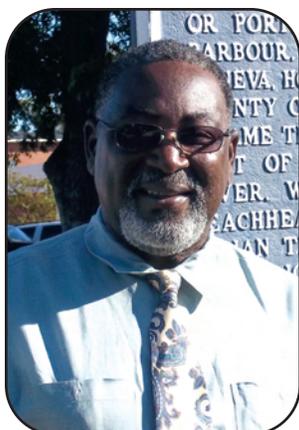
Mrs. Gwen Bruner, Geneva County. Ms. Bruner is married to Ramon Perez Bruner and they have four children and two grandchildren. Mrs. Bruner is employed at the Citizens Bank in Geneva.



Mrs. Lori Wilcox, Houston County. Married to Ken Wilcox and they have one daughter Megann. Mrs. Wilcox is the General Manager at Wiregrass Commons Mall, and is involved in the chamber leadership program.



Mr. Mickey Murdock, Coffee County. Sworn in as mayor of City of Elba on September 29, 2011. He served on the City of Elba Water and Electric Board for 12 years. He serves on various Boards in the Community. He is a member of the Elba Rotary Club and Ino Baptist Church. He has been married to Liz Herod Murdock for 47 years and they have three sons.



Commissioner Henry Grimsley, Henry County. Married for 38 years to Johnnie Mae Grimsley. Two daughters, Sharona and Scharreta, three grandchildren. Retired after 32 years with UPS, member of St. Paul Baptist Church in Abbeville, Chairman of the Deacons Board.



Mr. Sammy Glover, Covington County. Married to Annie Glover. Member of the Board of Registrars in Covington County since 1998. Retired State Director for UNITE, member of St. Peter Missionary Baptist Church in Andalusia, Chairman of the Deacons Board.

Mayor James Grimes - Remembered



Mayor James Grimes, City of Elba, passed away September 9th, 2011. Mayor Grimes was a dedicated SEARP&DC Board of Directors member for the past 15 years. He also served on the Revolving Loan Fund Board for 13 years. Mayor Grimes was a dependable and loyal member and he will be greatly missed by the Board of Directors and the Staff of SEARP&DC. Mayor Grimes leaves behind his wife, Henrietta and two children, many family members and a community of colleagues that will deeply miss him.



Mr. John Glover, Henry County. Mr. Glover serves on the Headland City Council. He is a member of Greater Shiloh Baptist Church, Secretary of the Finance Committee and also serves on the Deacons Board.

Alabama Advantage Program for Relocation



Byard and program participants who have relocated to the Fort Rucker area. Bill Meadows, serves as the Program Manager for the Alabama Advantage program. A program was held recently at the Daleville Convention center highlighting the economic impact of relocation around military installations like Fort Rucker.

The program delivers information via the web at www.AlabamaAdvantage.com and through an annual publication, The Alabama Advantage Magazine. To request a copy of the magazine please email info@AlabamaAdvantage.com.

The Alabama Advantage Program assists interested parties in discovering an Alabama community to relocate or retire. Pictured to the left top is ADECA Director Jim



Area leaders who attended the Alabama Advantage meeting are standing L to R: Billy Blackwell, Fred McNabb, Mark Culver, Earl Gilmore, Ryan Blalock, Ray Marler, Lenwood Herron, Kenneth Boswell. Seated L to R: John Thompson; Steve McKinnon, Lori Ward, Mike Schmitz, Jim Byard, Wess Etheredge, Ted Stanford, and Tyrus Waters.

SEARP&DC Employee Continues Education



Sarah Hesters, IT Administrator for SEARP&DC, continued her professional growth and knowledge during the past year by obtaining Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist status by passing the

Windows 7 configuration examination. She also achieved CISCO Certified Network Associate designation, qualifying her to install, configure, maintain and troubleshoot medium size networks.

NONPROFIT
ORG
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit NO. 583
Dothan, AL

SOUTHEAST ALABAMA REGIONAL
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION
P. O. BOX 1406
Dothan, Alabama 36302

