

Ten new Georgia cities designated as Rural Zones



Kathy Papa – DCA Region 2 Representative, Hiawasse Mayor Liz Ordiales, Economic Development Director Denise McKay, Christopher Nunn – DCA Commissioner and Ebony Simpson – DCA Planning Outreach & Training Coordinator

The cities of Colquitt, Donalsonville, Hawkinsville, Hiawasse, Leesburg, Moultrie, Stone Mountain, Thomson, West Point, and Woodbury have recently been designated as Rural Zones. This program is a collaboration between the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and the Georgia Department of Economic Development.

Since its creation in 2017, this initiative provides tax credits to individuals creating jobs and making qualifying investments within historic downtown areas that have been designated as Rural

Zones. Each designation lasts for five years, and activities to begin earning tax credits within these 10 new Rural Zones begins Jan. 1, 2021. Communities are encouraged to develop strategies and share information about the benefits to businesses and investors.

The program includes the following Georgia state income tax incentives which are utilized for job-creation activities, investment in downtown properties, and renovation of properties. The credits can be layered, but none are available without the job creation element being present.

The Job Tax Credit is equivalent to \$2,000 per new full-time equivalent job per year for up to 5 years. The Investment Credit is equivalent to 25% of the purchase price of a property within the designated Rural Zone (not to exceed \$125,000). The Rehabilitation Credit is equivalent to 30% of the qualified rehabilitation costs of a building located within a designated Rural Zone (not to exceed \$150,000).

Applications for Rural Zones are available each year. For more information, visit dca.ga.gov.

Class of 2021 receives Senior T-Shirts from UCB



Thank you to United Community Bank for sponsoring the Senior Class of 2021 t-shirt. Receiving this custom signature shirt is a favorite tradition among upcoming seniors at Towns County High School. Seniors take pride in wearing this keepsake their senior year. Pictured are Hiawasse Branch President Brandon Grimsley and Branch Manager Cheryl Barrett with Senior Class Officers (L-R) Lelia Barnard, Natalie Smith, Allie Dills, Maci Walls, Vanessa Floyd, and Laura Kate Gleaton.

SAR Meeting...from Page 1A

speed with a list of the group's recent regional activities.

"I didn't want to have (a meeting) in September because we didn't have enough people willing to participate," Ogden said, "but I was so pleased with the positive response to the (November) meeting.

"It's been a long time since we've had a meeting, and we were able to participate in quite a few things. We encourage everyone to participate in the events if you can."

In July, the Blue Ridge Mountain Sons presented an appreciation plaque and a flag certificate to the Union County Sheriff's Office, and they did the same in early August in Gilmer County and Towns County.

The group also honored the Hiawasse and Blue Ridge police departments on Aug. 10, along with the Ellijay Police Department and Fannin County Sheriff's Office a week later.

On Aug. 15, the SAR

joined the Daughters of the American Revolution to celebrate the passage of the 19th Amendment by honoring Mary Jane White, the first woman voter in Georgia.

The group was the recipient of a proclamation from Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris on Aug. 20 declaring Sept. 17-23 as Constitution Week, and in mid-September, members of the SAR presented the Traveling Trunk to the local Classical Conversations Homeschool Cooperative.

After attending the annual DAR picnic on Sept. 19, the SAR co-sponsored and took part in the Oct. 3 patriot grave marking in Dawsonville.

Following a meal from Brother's and other SAR business, Weaver took center stage to discuss the recent wildfires. He opened by explaining the unpredictable fall weather in Wyoming at 6,000-plus feet above sea

level.

"Whenever you go out West in September, you're going to get snow," he said. "As it turns out, when I left out of Denver on Oct. 25, it was in a snowstorm."

According to Weaver, he was one of the 1,200 people assigned to combat the fires, and he saw five straight days of intense firefighting covering 177,000 acres.

"Over my career, 100,000-acre fires really aren't anything anymore, but we had three red-flag wind events," he said. "I've been in a few hurricanes, and during one of those wind events, it reminded me of that."

After Weaver's address, the SAR concluded the evening with its business meeting, featuring the officers' reports, approval of minutes from the March meeting, and a confirmation of the Dec. 12 Christmas party.

Community...from Page 1A

wrong candidate, we will have problems that could last the next four years or more, but I think we will recover as a country. I don't think this is as massive as people make it out to be."

David Kay of Rabun County said he didn't think the country would survive another big COVID shutdown, and that the economy needed mending before it collapsed even further.

"I'm just ready for it to be over," Kay said at the Huddle House Nov. 13. "We just need to pack it up and move on. This virus needs a vaccine, and we need to get back to

work. I heard rumors that (Joe) Biden may want to enforce a lockdown if he is in office, and I don't think that would be a good idea.

"This country is barely holding on with this current situation, another lockdown would sure be a nail in the coffin. I know people that have lost their homes because of the virus, and I know people that have come close and been living paycheck to paycheck and barely scraping by.

"I'm telling you, we can't let this go on. It will do permanent damage, more than it has already."

While shopping at Linda's

Drapery & Gifts Friday, Towns Countian Ronnie Bennington shared his desire for people to let go of their differences to better the nation.

"In 2021, I would like to see us actually working together," Bennington said. "Throughout this entire pandemic, we have been arguing about what is best and which candidate is best to suit the needs, and that just isn't getting anything done.

"We aren't getting anywhere by being at a stalemate. We have turned this pandemic into a political campaign and used it as a way to divide each other. That is not how this should be treated at all.

"I don't care who you voted for or what you believe, this was a serious situation, and here we are months later still worried about it. When we treat this like a game, then we get played."

American Red Cross Volunteers

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train individuals in first aid and CPR, support America's military families, or take on any number of other roles that make our communities safer,

stronger and more resilient.

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