



CLAY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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If you have a problem, question or concern involving your county government, answers and assistance are as close as your phone or computer. For contact information of county departments or commissioners, see Dept. and Contact Info., www.claycountyga.org or call 229.768.3238 Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Additional copies of this newsletter and previous versions can be viewed and downloaded from our county web site in the document section at www.claycountyga.org.



Notable News

Clay County Planning & Zoning Commission is seeking five (5) individuals to fill the posts of the newly established commission. One person from each voting precinct will be selected by the Clay County Board of Commissioners. To be considered for the Planning & Zoning Commission, applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. Be a resident or landowner of Clay County
2. Have an Associate Degree or higher
3. Provide a resume' listing working and community experience
4. May NOT be a realtor or land developer/promoter, which would, in any way, give the appearance of a conflict
5. Must attend Planning & Zoning Commission Training or other training as may be prescribed by the County Commission.
6. Constitutional Officers and employees of Clay County may NOT hold a position on this commission.

Interested parties should submit their qualifications and the zoning district they live in to: Clay County Administrator, P O Box 519, Fort Gaines, GA 39851. Resumes and qualifications will be accepted until March 30, 2007.

Schedule of Events

Clay County Board of Commission meetings are held the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Clay County Courthouse Annex with the exception of December. The only regular meeting in December will be on Tuesday, Dec. 4th.

Economic Development Council meetings will be held the first Monday of each month at the private dining room at Bagby State Park Lodge at Noon for lunch and 12:30 p.m. for the meeting.

Family Connections meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 11:00 a.m. at Bagby Lodge. All Clay residents, business owners and faith based organizations are invited to participate.

UPCOMING COUNTY HOLIDAYS

County Offices will be closed on the following dates:

Good Friday—April 6, 2007

Memorial Day—May 28, 2007



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COMMISSIONER TIMES

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Tornados Hit Clay County

On Thursday, March 1st, 2007 two tornados passed through Clay County causing damage in Gopher ridge subdivision, along Pataula Heights Road and north Clay Co.

Although considerable damage was done to both permanent homes as well as vacation homes, there were no injuries or deaths reported in Clay County.

On March 6th, Clay County was declared by FEMA as a public assistance disaster area. This means that Clay County will be able to apply for reimbursement for the costs of clean up on public roads. Estimated costs are expected to be about one third of the Public Works department annual budget.

Two clean up sights were set up to handle limbs and trees as well as Construction & Demolition (C&D) debris that was blown off houses. The county has been advised by FEMA it is not allowed to go on private property to pick up any debris from citizens yards or homes. It is the homeowners or their contractors responsibility to remove and dispose of any debris or C&D that is the result of the storm in the proper manner.

Clay County sends special thanks to the Georgia Highway Patrol, Red Cross, FEMA, GEMA, Mr. Eddie Watson, Mr. George Cathrall, Georgia Power, Cobb EMC, Windstream, the City of Morgan, Clay County Volunteer Fire Department, Clay County EMS and Clay County Sherriff's office and Clay County Public Works for their assistance in quickly responding to our needs. The Public Works Department and the Sheriff's office responded immediately and had roads cleared within two hours of the event. Thanks to all the individual citizens who also pitched in and provided assistance to our neighbors in need.

It is expected it will take several more weeks before all roads will be cleared. Citizens are asked to use extreme caution while traveling in the areas affected by the storms. Traffic will be heavier than usual as contractors, work crews and the road department are working to clear downed debris.

In the wake of natural disasters, it is common for victims to be taken unaware by someone claiming to be an official disaster aid worker or a neighbor wanting to help complete disaster aid applications. The following are suggested Tips for hiring contractors for storm debris cleanup:

• **Get a written estimate.** Compare services and prices before making a final decision. Also, read the fine print. Some contractors charge a fee for a written estimate, which is often applied to the cost of subsequent repairs they make.



• **Check references.** Contractors should be willing to provide names of previous customers. Call several former customers who had similar work done to make sure they were satisfied with the job.

• **Ask for proof of insurance.** Make sure the contractor carries general liability insurance and workers' compensation. If the contractor is not insured, the homeowner may be liable for accidents that occur on the property.

• **Use reliable, licensed contractors.** Call your local Better Business Bureau (*and other local sources*) to inquire about a business before signing a contract.

• **Insist on a written contract.** A complete contract should clearly state all tasks to be performed, all associated costs and the payment schedule. Never sign a blank contract or one with blank spaces.

• **Get guarantees in writing.** Any guarantees made by the contractor should be written into the contract. The guarantee should clearly state what is guaranteed, who is responsible for the guarantee and how long the guarantee is valid.

• **Obtain a local building permit, if required.** Permits may be required for site work, other than demolition, and for reconstruction. Contact your local government for permit information.

• **Make final payments when the work is completed.** Do not sign completion papers or make the final payment until the work is completed to your satisfaction. A reputable contractor will not threaten you or pressure you to sign if the job is not finished properly.

• **Pay by check.** Avoid on-the-spot cash payments. The safest route is to write a check to the contracting company. A reasonable down payment is 30 percent of the total cost of the project, to be paid upon initial delivery of materials. Federal law gives consumers a three-day "cooling off" period for unsolicited door-to-door sales of more than \$25.

If necessary, cancel a contract in the proper manner. This should be done within three business days of signing. Be sure to follow the procedures for cancellation that are set out in the contract. Send the notification by registered mail with a return receipt to be signed by the contractor.

Disaster victims should be leery of anyone they do not know offering to help by filling out disaster assistance documents. Residents should not give personal or financial information. Anyone witnessing fraudulent activity should report it immediately to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General at **1-800-323-8603** or the Georgia Governor's Office of Consumer Affairs.

Southwest Georgia Regional E-911 Authority Receives Grant

On January 30th, Governor Sonny Perdue announced more than \$17 million in grant and loan awards from the **OneGeorgia** Authority to Georgia communities that will create jobs and implement economic development projects. The regularly scheduled OneGeorgia board meeting was held at the Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation in historic Warm Springs.

“We are preparing rural Georgia to compete in the 21st century economy with a comprehensive and integrated economic development strategy,” said Governor Perdue. “We are providing the financial resources necessary to stimulate private investment and economic growth “Our investments over the last six years have supported nearly 350 projects aimed at making rural Georgia a competitor in the global marketplace.”

Governor Perdue and members of the OneGeorgia Authority Board approved the grants and loans from the OneGeorgia Authority’s portfolio of financing programs including Equity, EDGE, BRIDGE, AIRGeorgia and ESB. These projects, along with their respective local leadership representatives, were recognized at the OneGeorgia board meeting.

The Regional E-911 Fund has provided grants over the last three years for costs associated with the start-up of E-911 emergency services in Georgia’s most economically challenged counties. The Authority congratulated the local leadership of four counties on the expansion of the Clay and Quitman E-911 Center to also serve Randolph and Stewart counties.

Clay, Quitman, Randolph and Stewart Counties – \$200,000: Grant funds will be used to assist with mapping, signage and equipment purchases to expand the Clay and Quitman E-911 Center, funded with a \$400,000 grant in 2003. The applicant will use a centralized dispatching system in the four-county coverage area with a combined population of about 20,000 people. With such a large geographical footprint, the proposed four-county centralized dispatch is the most efficient approach to provide emergency medical services. The expansion of the two-county system into a four-county system represents significant progress in the development of regional collaboration and partnerships in one of Georgia’s most economically challenged areas.

GEORGIA GUILD OF CRAFTSMEN OFFERS BASKET WEAVING COURSE



On Saturday, April 28, 2007 the Georgia Guild of Craftsmen will offer a basket weaving course to the public. The class will be instructed by master weaver Ellie Saccente. Participants will have all the supplies and tools provided and will be able to complete a basket during the class period.

The class is limited to ten applicants. The fee for the class is \$40.00 which covers the basket supplies (\$20.00) and tools (\$20.00). You will take home your completed basket and the tools are yours to keep for future projects. If there are more than ten people registered, we will offer additional classes to handle the overflow. Class will be from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Clay County Senior Center. Please contact Jean Turn at the Clay County Library (229.768.2248) to sign up for the class.

If you are interested in the Georgia Guild of Craftsmen or additional classes, please contact Jean Turn. The guild is seeking members and suggestions for other classes of interest.

Comprehensive Planning Meeting Scheduled



On Thursday, March 8, 2007, Clay County kicked off the Comprehensive Planning meeting with a dinner prepared by Men of Clay. The meeting was well attended and the attendees worked on developing the vision statement for the county. The meeting is to develop a comprehensive strategy for Clay County for the next ten years. This will determine key aspects of our management focus and planning for Clay County’s future based on your input.

The following are the dates for the remaining planning meetings. All meetings are open to the public and your participation is encouraged.

- April 12, 2007 7:00 p.m. Clay Elementary School
- May 10, 2007 7:00 p.m. Clay Elementary School
- June 14, 2007 7:00 p.m. Clay Elementary School
- July 12, 2007 7:00 p.m. Clay Elementary School
- August 9, 2007 7:00 p.m. Clay Elementary School

Additional information can be found at the Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Centers website at:

<http://www.lcrdc.org/clay.htm>

Fort Gaines and Clay County “Keep Georgia Beautiful Campaign”

April has been designated as “Keep Georgia Beautiful” month and in so doing, Clay County and Fort Gaines plan their clean up campaign kick off for Monday April 9th. We encourage everyone to clean up their neighborhoods, local streets and roads and around their homes.

1. The campaign will cover the entire city of Fort Gaines and all of Clay County. You must reside in Clay County or be a customer of the Clay County Refuse plan.

3. Landfill will be open to Clay County landowners or residents for free disposal from April 9th through April 13th, 2006. Refuse will be accepted from 7:30 to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. No Businesses Please! All disposals must meet the following guidelines:

All refuse must be sorted according to the type of refuse regardless if it is picked up at your home AND/OR taken to the landfill. *All mixed loads will be rejected at land fill.*



White goods – stoves, refrigerators, freezers, etc.

Wood, yard trash – must be less than 12 inches in diameter, inert materials, NO stumps. No plastic bags allowed in the landfill area. Contents dumped into the inert landfill (leaves, organic waste) will need to be dumped out of plastic bags by hauler. No plastic bags can be accepted in this area. (This does not apply to regular garbage being sent to outside landfill.)

Lumber – All building materials must be less than 6’ long for disposal. Boards with nails in them will be rejected.

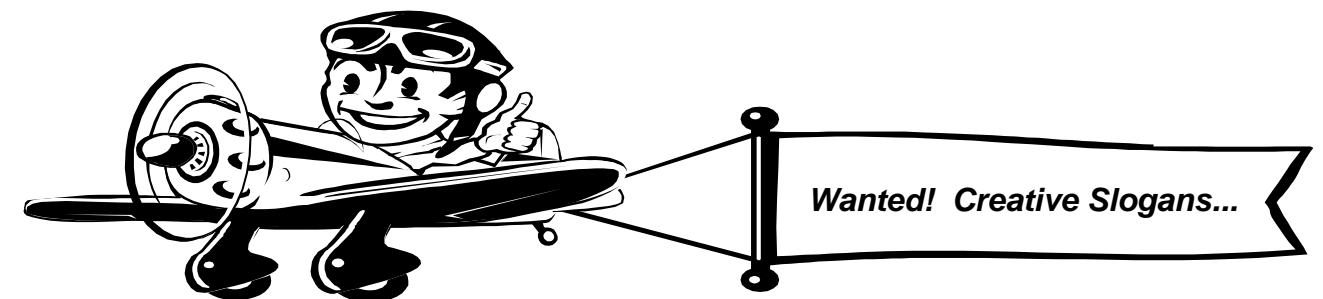
You must be a resident of Clay County (have a Clay County license tag on your vehicle) OR provide your Clay County Refuse Billing statement for verification.

ITEMS WHICH ARE NOT ALLOWED! No Tires, No bed springs, No fencing materials, No paint, gas, diesel or other flammable materials. (Empty paint cans, dry with lids removed will be accepted.) No stumps, No shingles, No dead animals or carcasses, No batteries, No containers with any kind of liquid, No refuse accepted from commercial vendors, contractors, home builders, construction, etc.

Call 229-768-3238 to schedule pick up of materials from your home. Reservations for pickup will be taken from March 26th through April 5th. Items must be sorted per the above list to be picked up. Pickup will be between April 9th and April 13th. Materials placed beside the road after county personnel have serviced your area or road will not be picked up.

Please note the county will begin enforcing zoning policy for trash, junk and junk yards throughout the county. Now is a great opportunity to get rid of unsightly materials in and around your property.

Help us make the City of Fort Gaines and Clay County a place to be proud of and welcoming to visitors!



The Clay County Economic Development Council is sponsoring a contest for creative slogans that represent the county and our surroundings. Cash prizes will be offered for the top three slogans selected. These slogans will be used in advertising campaigns to promote the county such as our county website, printed ads, magazines, brochures, etc.

Your creative slogans will be accepted until April 30th. The top three slogans will be selected on Monday, May 7th. Prizes will be \$75.00 for first, \$50.00 for second and \$25.00 for third. All slogans submitted will become the property of Clay County Economic Development Council. The EDC will retain the rights to use the slogans in advertising campaigns, letterhead, etc.

Slogans must represent Clay County and our desire to promote tourism, retirees, outdoor recreations (fishing, boating, hunting) and/or cultural heritage. Slogans using profanity or are in bad taste, will be disqualified.

You may enter as often as you like. Your submittal should include your name, address, phone numbers, email and your slogan. Mail your submittal to: EDC Slogan, P O Box 519, Fort Gaines, GA 39851. You may also submit your slogan through the contact page on the county website at: <http://www.claycountyga.org/contact.php> Be sure to put the required information in the body of the email.