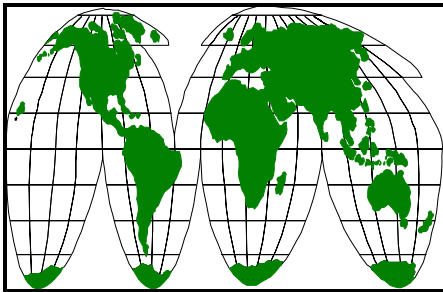


What is the World Trade Center?

The World Trade Center buildings in New York were considered by most to be the living symbol of our dedication to world peace. In addition to housing hundreds of business tenants, they were part of a worldwide network committed to promoting international trade, commerce, understanding, and unity.

The World Trade Centers Association (WTCA) is a not-for-profit, nonpo-



litical association dedicated to the establishment and effective operation of the World Trade Centers as instruments for trade expansion. Founded in 1970, the WTCA now represents 331 member cities in 97 countries. They are all involved in the development or operation of World Trade Centers or in providing related services. These World Trade Centers service more than 500,000 international companies.

The WTCA's founding principles are as applicable today as they were 30 years ago:

- Encourage the expansion of world trade
- Promote international business relationships and understanding



- among nations
- Foster increased participation in world trade by industrializing nations
- Create and encourage mutual assistance and cooperation among members
- Promote and further the concept of the World Trade Center

WTCA members develop and maintain facilities to house the practitioners of trade and the services they need to conduct business, creating a central focal point for a region's trade services and activities, or a "one-stop shopping center" for international business. WTCA services include: Client support for WTCA On-line, the WTCA's Internet service; Trade Research and Information; Educational Programs and Facilities; Business Clubs; Exhibit Facilities; Consumer and Business Services (e.g., hotels, banks, restaurants and shops); Trade Mission Programs; Reciprocal Privileges at all other operating member facilities worldwide; and TradeCard, the world's first credit card for trade (through a WTCA subsidiary corporation).

The South Carolina World Trade
(WTC continued on page 4)

ACOG Receives National Award



COG Executive Director Bob Strother receives award from NADO President Bill Hess

In August, the Appalachian Council of Governments was the recipient of the National Association of Development Organization's **Innovation Award for Business and Entrepreneurial Development**. The recognition was for a project called Entrepreneurial Support: Informing the Public What's Available. Elements of the project involve establishing a multifaceted marketing plan and conducting workshops in cooperation with local Small Business Development Centers. To promote referrals, meetings were hosted for bankers and local economic developers to learn about loan funds. A special website www.scacog.org/rlf was developed for promotional purposes and to offer easy access to loan fund applications. The program has been especially helpful in attracting new loan recipients in the region's less urbanized counties and in increasing the loan portfolio to over \$5 million with 55 current borrowers. For more information on this project, call Dave Mueller, ACOG's Special Projects/Loan Fund Director at (864) 242-9733.

ACOG Adopts Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

On August 24, 2001, the Appalachian Council of Governments adopted the Appalachian Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The plan serves as the Regional Strategic Plan for Economic Development for the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Economic Development Administration. Both of these agencies require that projects be identified and included within regional economic development strategies to qualify for grant funding.

To identify projects and issues, ACOG staff conducted over 150 meetings with individuals associated with economic development within their respective municipalities, counties, and the region. Several issue areas were identified for each county. These include water, sewer, transportation, downtown development, workforce development, and others.

In addition to identifying and listing projects, the plan includes an extensive analysis of regional conditions, including assets and liabilities. Local, county, and regional attributes were identified by conducting geographic, population, economic base, and resource analyses. This information was developed and used in conjunction with data provided by the Strom Thurmond Institute.

After completing the individual meetings and compiling the projects and issue information, follow-up meetings were conducted within each county in the region to ensure information was accurate and that all projects related to economic development were included in the plan.

The last step before presenting the plan to the Appalachian Council of Governments Board was to conduct two general public input meetings. The



ACOG Board was provided comments from these meetings for their review prior to adoption by unanimous vote on August 24, 2001. The plan will serve as the regional economic development plan for the next five years and can be amended at any time during its duration. Progress reports, tracking project development, will be completed annually.

Please contact Shawn Colin with

Senior Escort Project

Senior Action has been awarded a grant through the ElderCare Trust Fund to coordinate escorted, volunteer-based transportation services for qualifying adults to and from medical appointments.

Though it is similar in nature to the current medical transportation service being provided by Senior Action, the Senior Escort Project is unique in that it will involve: a new marketing initiative for volunteer recruitment; a much-expanded pool of volunteers from the community; the volunteers option to provide transportation by driving their own vehicle, the client's vehicle, or a Senior Action wheelchair lift van; a coordinated effort for assessment and referral amongst the project's

(Senior Escort continued on page 5)

ACOG Welcomes New Long Term Care Ombudsman



Brenda M. Alvarado recently joined the Appalachian Council of Governments' staff. She brings professional skills as well as personal qualities to the Ombudsman program that will lend themselves well to the duties required in investigating complaints, facility and community training, and mediating and advocating on behalf of residents.

She worked as a Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman for five years in Charleston, West Virginia, before moving to South Carolina. She was responsible for monitoring long term care facilities in seven counties. She trained volunteer Ombudsmen and supervisory staff on resident rights and other health issues. She was also responsible for investigating complaints and mediating on behalf of the residents.

Before becoming an Ombudsman, Brenda worked with the Appalachian Community Health Center in Elkins, West Virginia, as an instructor. She trained and supervised staff, developed a comprehensive curriculum for adults that are mentally challenged, and taught pre-vocational skills to clients in order for them to obtain employment in the community.

She received a MS degree in

(Alvarado continued on page 5)

Rights of Public Employees Called For Military Service

Paid Leave:

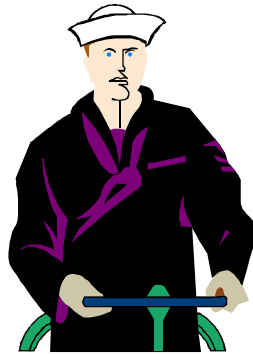
Employees of the State and its political subdivisions are afforded fully paid leaves of absence for military service by S.C. Code Ann. § 8-7-90, which provides:



1. Up to fifteen regularly scheduled, paid work days per year for training or other duties ordered by the Governor or other military authority. (Virtually all Guard and Reserves train on a fiscal year basis, so "year" means the federal fiscal year, from October 1 to September 30.)
2. In the event an employee is called to serve during an emergency, he is entitled to "such leave of absence" not exceeding 30 additional days. Employees who are called to duty as a result of the current terrorism emergency after September 30 are entitled to 45 paid days of military leave for duty during the emergency. Employees who are called to emergency duty between September 11 and September 30, 2001, should receive paid military leave until the end of the fiscal year, unless they have previously exhausted their entire 45 day paid entitlement for this fiscal year. On October 1, 2001, the employee's leave eligibility would "reload" and the employee is entitled to another 15 paid days of leave for the new fiscal year and up to 30 additional days for the emergency. (This interpretation of the statute is consistent with the advice that the Budget and Control Board's Office of Human Resources is giving state agencies.)

Insurance Continuation Benefits During Activation:

A call to extended military duty is both a COBRA qualifying event and triggers rights under the **Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)**, which is similar to COBRA, and provides that persons absent by reason of service in the uniformed services may elect to continue health insurance coverage for up to 18 months following the beginning date of their absence for service. (Note: Employees serving less than 31 days



may not be required to pay more than the employee share for coverage.)

Employees should be given notice of continuation rights under COBRA and USERRA upon leaving for military service. USERRA also provides that employees must be afforded the same benefits available to employees on leave of absence for other reasons. So if your leave of absence policy provides for payment of employee health insurance premiums for a period of time, the same benefit should be afforded upon military absence. **Important:** USERRA applies to all employers. COBRA generally exempts employers having less than 20 employees.

Reinstatement Rights:

USERRA also provides reinstatement rights for employees serving on active duty for less than five years, and contains anti-discrimination provisions.

Contact your city/county attorney or human resources office with specific questions about reinstatement or other

ADC Approves Loans in Spartanburg and Oconee Counties

The Board of Directors of the Appalachian Development Corporation (ADC) recently approved a loan for Prime Products, Inc., of Boiling Springs, S.C., in the amount of \$200,000. Due to an increase in contracts and orders, Prime is seeking to purchase and move to a larger building and to purchase additional machinery. The total project cost is \$2,270,000, with the primary funding coming through a lender and the SBA 504 program. The ADC funds will be used for working capital and equipment. Twenty-five new manufacturing jobs can be created.

The Appalachian Development Corporation was also successful in closing and funding an SBA 504 loan in the amount of \$400,000 for Hari-Om Enterprises, LLC, owned by Jugal Purohit. The project involved Hari-Om Enterprises' new Best Western Motel in Seneca, South Carolina. The Development Corporation funding was used for the furniture, fixtures, and equipment and some building costs in the Seneca facility. Seneca National Bank pro-



Historical footnote: During the American Revolution, **Colonel Christopher Gadsden of South Carolina** made a copy of this flag and submitted the design to the Provincial Congress in South Carolina.

ElderCare Trust Fund Grant

Senior Centers of Spartanburg County has received an ElderCare Trust Fund Grant in the amount of \$12,000. The target populations are seniors and other transportation-dependent individuals living within a five-mile radius of a small rural town. Use of the grant funds, coupled with other funding, provides seed money to develop and implement a volunteer program that matches seniors' needs with available community resources.

Senior Centers of Spartanburg and its eight networking partners developed a mechanism to match community resources and community needs by building upon a volunteer base in the Northeast area of Spartanburg County. The following factors prompted their selection: a strong Congregational Nursing Program incorporating eight churches (both multi-denominational and multi-racial congregations); a medically underserved rural area, a history of supportive community leadership, and citizen involvement. The imminent construction of a new Community/Senior Center in the Northeast area of Spartanburg County to house helping agencies, recreation, and health and human services was also a factor. The "Matching Seniors' Needs with Community Resources" will address issues such as mobilization, mental health, crime and safety, physical health, abuse and neglect, and a lack of access to resources.

Senior Centers of Spartanburg County will act as the lead and fiscal agent, administering the project from the new Senior Center/Recreation complex located in the Northeast area of Spartanburg. Leadership, guidance and project direction will be provided by the Senior Center to the eight networking partners. The target population will be reached one on one with referrals being made by the partners and the larger community. The community partners are: Senior Centers of Spartanburg County, Senior Resource Network,

Chesnee Community Congregational Nurse Program, Chesnee Recreation Center, City of Chesnee, Spartanburg County Planning, Mobile Meals, and VSP Foundation.

The ElderCare Trust Fund believes this volunteer partnership can result in a project that can be replicated in other locations through the state and the nation.

For more information, contact Senior Centers of Spartanburg County,

Workforce Investment Act Success Story

Debbie Dunson is extraordinary. She has overcome the barrier of physical impairment to the point that she no longer thinks of herself as handicapped — a remarkable achievement for the 41-year-old graduate of Tri-County Technical College.

After graduating from high school, she spent 18 years working. The company she was working for closed and she was faced with limited employment possibilities. With great effort to overcome the usual fears of adults returning to school, Debbie enrolled at Tri-County Technical College in 1997. A complication due to diabetes interrupted her 1999 spring semester. From April to June 1999, Debbie underwent repeated surgeries for the removal of her lower leg. She returned to campus in a wheelchair. She could not use crutches; if she fell, the damage could be a severe setback. After weeks of therapy, at long last Debbie walked again with the use of a cane, just before Christmas. It was a lengthy, pain-filled recovery, but her tears overflowed with gratitude — she could walk.

Debbie Dunson received her Med-

ical Laboratory Technology degree in May 2001. She was determined and persistent. No matter the obstacle, in her words, "You do what you have to do." Perhaps most remarkably of all, never once did she give in to the temptation to become depressed. "If you look at what you don't have, you'll never have anything. Be thankful for what you have. Make the most of it," says Debbie.

Debbie never walked alone. Her husband, Roger, encouraged and supported her. So did her classmates and instructors. For one like Debbie, the world bends to help. She inspires everyone to release their trivial grievances and devote himself or herself to giving from the heart. Cannon Memorial Hospital in Pickens is where Debbie carries out her functions as a Medical Lab Technician. Now, she is stronger than the misfortune. She sees this life as an opportunity.

This is just one example of the many successes achieved through the Workforce Investment Act. For more information, contact Teri Gilstrap,

(WTC continued from page 1)

Center is located in Charleston. Executive Director Mark Condon asserts that this organization strengthens South Carolina's economy through the power of education, information and worldwide connections. As part of the World Trade Centers Association, the South Carolina World Trade Center gives access to international trade opportunities to all South Carolinians.

In his 1989 address to the WTCA General Assembly, WTCA President Guy F. Tozzoli stated, "The World Trade Centers help not only to facilitate international trade and build economic well-being, but they foster a higher level of harmony and peace among the nations of the world. The practical day-to-day commerce and business conducted in and through world trade centers transcends narrow nationalism as well as ethnic and political barriers of the past."

ARC Assistance for Small Towns



Five Communities Participate in Pilot Program

Five of the Upstate’s smallest communities have been approved for participation in a new technical assistance program targeted at small municipal governments. The program is being sponsored by the Appalachian Regional Commission and will be managed by the Appalachian Council of Governments.

Five initial jurisdictions were identified based upon need, size, and willingness to participate. The initial target jurisdictions include the Town of **Reidville** (pop. 478), the Town of **Pelzer** (pop. 97), the Town of **West Pelzer** (pop. 879), the Town of **Norris** (pop. 847) and the Town of **Six Mile** (pop. 553). If successful, the program will be expanded next year to include other jurisdictions.

The project is designed to provide a number of services tailored to the needs of small municipal governments. ACOG will offer training, technical consulting and other forms of hands-on municipal administration. Over the next few weeks, a work program will be developed for each jurisdiction.

The Small Towns Technical Assistance Program will be coordinated by ACOG’s Governmental Services Department. Call Joe Newton or George McDaniel at ACOG for further infor-

(Senior Escort continued from page 2)

partners, who include the American Red Cross, Greenville Free Medical Clinic, GHS Medical Clinic and DSS-Adult Protective Services; and the hiring of a part-time Senior Escort Volunteer Manager to coordinate community outreach and volunteer recruitment for the project.

(Alvarado continued from page 2)

Health Care Promotion from West Virginia University, a BS degree in Health Care Administration from Davis and Elkins College and an AS degree in Nursing RN at Davis and Elkins College.

Her dedication to the elderly in nursing homes, residential care facilities, mental health facilities and mental retardation facilities has been clearly displayed since joining us. Brenda says that she is looking forward to continuing serving as an Ombudsman and has

Calendar of Events

- October 3 Meal Standards and Bid Specifications Review Committee, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Central Midlands COG, Columbia.
- October 11 Aging Component Directors Meeting, 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., COG Training Room.
- October 15 Meal Standards and Bid Specifications Review

Committee, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Central Midlands COG, Columbia.

- October 16 DHHS/AAA Meeting, 10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., Capital Senior Center, Columbia.
- October 18 Joint Conference on Aging Planning Meeting, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., SCANPHA, Columbia.
- October 19 SC4A Meeting, 10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., Lexington County Aging and Recreation Commission, Lexington.
- October 23-25 S. C. Silver Haired Legislature Annual Session, S. C. House of Representatives’ Chambers, Columbia.
- October 24 Regional Aging Advisory Committee Meeting, 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Council Boardroom.
- October 26 Summer School of Gerontology Committee Meeting, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Coastal Carolina University, Conway.
- October 28 COG Board of Directors Meeting, 10:30 a.m., Council Boardroom.
- October 27-31 Joint S. C. and SE4A Training Conference, Wyndham Hotel, Myrtle Beach.
- October 28-31 Statewide Workforce Development Partnership Conference, Embassy Suites/Charleston

SCCDA To Hold Winter Meeting in Columbia on November 13

The South Carolina Community Development Association (SCCDA), an affiliate of the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC), will hold its annual winter meeting on November 13 at the Sheraton Convention Center in Columbia. The SCCDA, which provides a forum for learning about the total community development process, is made up of approximately 250 members representing a wide variety of public and private organizations, including city and county governments, public service districts, engineering firms, consultants, community development corporations, housing providers, bankers, economic development officials, several state agencies, and all 10 of the state's Councils of Governments.

Dirk Reis, Grants Services Director at the Appalachian COG and the 2001-2002 SCCDA President, will welcome



those in attendance and introduce Bill Workman, who will speak on the topic of Developing Your Community – Preparing for the New Century. Following that, Don Hinson, former ACOG Director, will discuss the findings and recommendations of the Governor's Affordable Housing Task Force. The one-day conference will also include such topics as housing rehabilitation, manufactured housing, the problems associated with large retailers

abandoning their "Big Boxes," attracting visitors to South Carolina, a session on "Loveable Communities" from the S. C. Downtown Development Association, and Community Development Corps. MASC will be sending out additional information and registration materials in the next few weeks, or you may log on to www.masc.state.sc.us/services/sccda.

VIEWPOINT

**Appalachian Council of Governments
P. O. Drawer 6668
Greenville, South Carolina 29606**

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GREENVILLE, SC
PERMIT NO. 1604
