



NEWS RELEASE

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White County Commissioners Make Lead Gift for Revitalization of Cleveland Cemetery Project

April 14, 2008 – Cleveland, Georgia – The White County Board of County Commissioners today presented Cleveland Better Home Town with a check for \$3001.22. The monies were requested by the organization's Historic Preservation Committee Chaired by Judge Garrison Baker and will be used as seed money for the revitalization of the Cleveland Cemetery. "The Cleveland Cemetery is a historic local treasure and we are thrilled that the Commissioners share our vision to revitalize it and give it the dignity it deserves," said Judge Baker.

Cleveland Better Home Town, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (C) 3 charitable organization. In 2007, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs officially designated Cleveland, GA as a ***Georgia Better Home Town***. Cleveland Better Home Town is a member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and works to promote the 4-Point Approach to downtown revitalization. The 4-Point Approach involves *Organization, Design, Economic Restructuring, and Promotion*. In addition, Cleveland Better Home Town has established a *Historic Preservation Committee* to help preserve the rich heritage of our local community. "We are committed to preserving our history and we were honored when Judge Garrison Baker, a local historian and author himself, agreed to Chair our Historic Preservation Committee," said Charlie Thomas, Chairman of the Board for Cleveland Better Home Town.

"Cemeteries are among Georgia's most important historic resources...."They are sacred places where family and friends can visit to show honor and respect for departed friends and loved ones. Cemeteries are certainly among the most revered and sacred public places in most towns...this from *Preserving Georgia's Historic Cemeteries*," a publication by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The Cleveland Cemetery dates back to the 1800's and for years has been cared for by three local churches (First Baptist Church, Cleveland Methodist Church and the

Cleveland Worship Center, formerly Cleveland Congregational Holiness.) that have regularly maintain the lawn and kept it clean

With the donation from the county, the proposed plan for the cemetery would include further landscaping the cemetery, erecting an iron gate and fence around the property, installing a brick paver walkway thru the cemetery, designing a bronze plaque with a brief history of the cemetery, and identifying burial sites. A number of the city's earliest families are buried in the Cemetery and the Committee proposes to identify the burial sites and have a brief written history of these early families. The committee also hopes to integrate middle school, high school and college history classes to assist with work on the project. "By involving students, we hope to instill and promote an ongoing interest and commitment to historical preservation in the local community," said Judge Baker.

The lead gift from the White County Board of Commissioners will enable Cleveland Better Home town to leverage the donation against grant monies available for cultural preservation of cemeteries through the State," said Maria Jurado-Flynn, Manager for Cleveland Better Home Town. As a non-profit organization, all donations to Cleveland Better Home Town are tax deductible. Individuals or other organizations interested in supporting the Cleveland Cemetery Project can contact Cleveland Better Home Town at 706-9969-3336.

The Mission of the Cleveland Better Home Town Historic Preservation Committee is:
"To identify and preserve the cultural heritage of the Cleveland Town Square."

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