

GTPDD SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

The GTPDD celebrates the anniversary of employees with at least 5 years of service.

JANUARY

Phylis Benson - 13 years
Tricia Black - 13 years
Jessie Evans - 8 years
Jean Jolly - 6 years
Wendy Williams - 8 years
Liz Wyatt - 7 years

FEBRUARY

George Crawford - 29 years

MARCH

Jimmy Cole - 13 years
Evelyn Dickerson - 11 years
Bobby Gann - 33 years

MICAP Mississippi Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program

Mississippi Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (MICAP), also known as the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), is a counseling program designed to answer questions about all types of health insurance for senior citizens. Whether it is Medicare, Medicaid, Advantage Plans, Prescription Drug Plans, Supplemental Insurance or other types of coverage, MICAP counselors are trained to assist with your questions.

MICAP does not limit its assistance to information only. Hands on assistance with medical claims problems, applications for needed services, as well as appeals issues, are also handled by MICAP personnel.

If you know elderly persons needing assistance with any type of insurance issue be sure to have them call Sharon Duke at Golden Triangle Planning and Development District, Inc. 662-324-7860.

Folks, April is National Volunteer Month.

I wish it were possible for me to shake the hand of each volunteer who has contributed time, talent, and travel to make our programs successful and our communities better and stronger. In particular, the nutrition program for senior citizens depends greatly upon volunteer services to insure meals for the homebound. Many of our volunteers are seniors themselves, assisting their peers in quality lives.

In future issues of this Newsletter, we plan to feature some of these noble citizens.

Volunteers, April is your month. And, we thank you for what you do for all of us. ---RLJ



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Our Pioneers

I thought it would be fun to see what two GTPDD long time staffers had to say about THEN and NOW. Bobby Gann has been on board 33 years; George Crawford has 29 years of service.

Bobby said, "In three decades I have experienced a lot of changes. We are like the pioneers who saw the country evolve from the days of covered wagon and pony express to the telegraph and horseless carriage.

"Technological changes have been the most prominent from manual typewriters and stenciled copies to computers, faxes and emails. I didn't know what a computer was until I came to work here. Then, Rudy came aboard. His first order of business was to order 2 computers and instructed staff to 'dive in,' as none of us had any formal computer training. When we paid over \$11,000 for an accounting computer, we thought we were really uptown. Now there is a computer on almost every desk, and we feel handicapped if they are down.



Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson
Executive Director

"The tremendous growth of the PDD in the number of programs and services offered, and the number of staff required to provide these services, has made the changes necessary," commented Bobby.

George said he could remember when the entire staff could travel in one car to attend meetings. Now, we have a fleet of 24 automobiles!

George added that the first copy machine he remembers made copies that faded after a while and large items used a steno duplicator. "We weren't sure about a fax machine's reliability for months. Now, they are standard, but being rapidly replaced by emails. With all the faxes and emails, imagine having to call an outside operator, like we did then, to get long distance service!

"We were initially housed at MSU. In the summer we brought tomato sandwiches for lunch; in the winter, for staff on the run, the 'Downstairs Cafeteria' was a blessing-coke and snack machines," George reminisces.

According to Bobby "While the changes have been challenging, they have also provided opportunities to be more efficient and productive." He added, "It's fun to discuss the 'olden days' with the younger staff, who listen skeptically because many of them weren't even born when George and I came to the PDD."

Bobby and George, I applaud your long time service. You two most assuredly have been able to change with the times.

Our warmest thoughts continue to be with the Larry Crowley Family during Larry's illness.



The GTPDD office is centrally located in Oktibbeha County in the Starkville Industrial Park

