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

From the Director...



Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson
Executive Director

Census, GIS, Redistricting. . . .

It is not news that, come March 2011, the Census Bureau will finish the delivery of mandated Redistricting data to the states, resulting from 2010 census information.

What is news, at least to many of us, is the comparative ease with which Redistricting can be accomplished, when we remember the hassles we encountered in years past when Redistricting occurred.

The introduction of GIS to the computer world has simplified, and improved, many facets of our personal lives (think of the GPS locators in new automobiles), as well as the workday world.

With GIS capabilities in place, Planning and Development Districts around the country have facilitated what was once a tedious, onerous chore (with scant assurance that data would be accurate) when it came time to produce a Redistricting Plan.

My GIS expert defines a Geographic Information System as follows: "A process of integrating hardware, software, and data to capture, manage, analyze, and display all forms of geographically referenced information." He adds, "GIS allows us to view, understand, question, interpret, and visualize data in many ways that reveal relationships, patterns, and trends in the form of maps, globes, reports, and charts."

"Fortunately," he says, "problem solving is expedited, as the system produces results that are quickly understood and easily shared. A GIS allows mapping locations, seeing what is nearby, and mapping changes to anticipate future conditions, decide on a course of action, or evaluate the results of an action or policy."

Continued on page 12.

Aging...

Medicare Changes 2010

Many seniors have recently received correspondence from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) concerning the new health care law and how it affects the Medicare program. The brochure explains both immediate and future changes to Medicare, as well as some changes for beneficiaries not yet entitled to Medicare.

The most immediate change Medicare beneficiaries will see is the one-time \$250 rebate check for those who reach the “gap” or “donut hole” of their prescription drug plans. The \$250 checks will be mailed automatically to those who qualify, beginning mid June, and will continue monthly throughout the year for those who reach the coverage gap. Individuals who already receive Medicare Extra Help to pay for cost associated with drug plans will not receive a rebate check.

If you did not receive this informative brochure and would like a copy please contact 1-800-Medicare or Golden Triangle Planning & Development District AAA at 1-662-324-7860.

Child Care...

Golden Triangle Planning and Development Child Care Division held its quarterly provider training on May 27, 2010. Mrs. Laura Dixon and Ms. Tiffany Dillard, representatives from Mississippi Department of Human Services – Office for Children and Youth Policy Unit, were present. Mrs. Dixon spoke on the availability of materials for family resource centers



and in-home providers. She also discussed upcoming Quality Rating Programs that would be

available for centers serving only school-aged children. Educational materials were distributed for center use.

Mrs. Charlene Smith, Regional Coordinator for the Mississippi Child Care Quality Rating Step (QRS) System Early Childhood Institute of Mississippi State University, was also present. She stated that



the goal of QRS Program is to improve the quality of child care service. The program is voluntary; any licensed facility can participate provided there is no probationary status. The benefits of QRS were discussed with focus on five areas: Administrative Policy, Professional Development, Learning Environment, Parent Involvement and Evaluation.

Mrs. Smith addressed two major areas of the Quality Step System – Monitoring Process and Classroom Evaluations. The monitoring process focuses on a child care center’s goals. For assessment in the classroom, trained evaluators use the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised (ECERS) and the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale Revised (ITERS-R) tools.

Providers were informed of resources and available training for QRS. After questions and answers, three directors enrolled their centers in the QRS Program.



Here we go again. . .



The Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc. held a groundbreaking on June 1st, 2010. The GTPDD will begin construction on the Golden Triangle Planning & Development District Senior Enrichment Center this summer. The building will house staff members from the Department of Aging as well as serve as a center for Senior Citizens to participate in daily enrichment activities.



Loans . . .

Featured Business



The new Central Station Grill has been at its new location since January 2010. It was the first of several businesses to open in the Central Station Shopping Center.

Located in the historic Borden Creamery on the corner of Lampkin and Montgomery Streets in Starkville, the *Eat With Us Group's Central Station Grill* was formerly known as the Cotton District Grill.

Arma Salazar, marketing director of the *Eat With Us Group*, said they are excited about the move and have received positive feedback from the community.

"I have heard nothing but positive things about the move," Salazar said. "Starkville citizens, Mississippi State University alumni and students are all excited. In a way, Starkville is adding a new restaurant to the menu. Everyone is excited to have another option."

"It is very exciting to know that we can help rejuvenate another historic area," Salazar said. "We were very successful in the historic Cotton District but we feel that the old Borden Creamery will be another great place for us. Our clientele changed over the years and this location gives us room to grow which is what all businesses want to do."

John Bean, CEO of Eat With Us, said the move brings the restaurant closer to downtown Starkville and will provide ample parking for customers. "We are bullish on Starkville," Bean said. "And the new restaurant is bigger, fresher and new."

Salazar said the new building does allow more and better parking than the Cotton District Grill and the restaurant will be a lot more visible which encourages walk-in traffic.

"We have an added private party room on the second floor and a balcony which is exciting," Salazar said. "Also, being at this intersection makes it easier for customers to access the parking areas."

Salazar said much of what people loved about the Cotton District Grill they will find at Central Station, especially the fun associated with MSU sports. "The Grill is the place to be before and after all Mississippi State Sports," Salazar said.

"We still thrive on good service. Our employees are dedicated to Making People Happy and going above and beyond for our guests," she added.

Central Station Grill features a perfect place to host your next meeting or dinner. With flexible seating for up to 80 people and curtains for privacy, the upstairs area can be configured to meet your needs. Take advantage of the full menu or have your special occasion or meeting catered.

For reservations or to schedule a tour, please call 662-323-6062. (See center insert for menu.)

Central Station Grill
200 South Montgomery
Starkville, MS 39759
662-323-6062



Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc.

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Central Station Grill
200 South Montgomery
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Medicaid Waiver...

The Eyes (and Hands) Still Have It



Despite a decline in her vision and at times difficulty using her hands, Mrs. Ernestine Edwards, a long time Wavier client, continues

to spend countless hours making thousands of stitches to produce works of cross-stitch art. I believe these works of art are worthy of display in the Smithsonian. Some have already been displayed in the Webster County Library. She began cross-stitching in 1994 (or perhaps earlier) after retiring from Webster General Hospital where she worked as its ER clerk for many years. Mrs. Edwards has completed over one hundred works which she has shared with her family, friends, and neighbors. Only a few remain in her home. She has completed the series of four covered bridges of Madison County, Iowa. Her *Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane* hangs in Walthall Baptist Church. She has cross-stitched the song *Amazing Grace*, Christmas scenes, angels, and many birth and wedding announcements. Mrs. Edwards is the proud mother of five children and a number of grand/great-grandchildren. Submitted by Choctaw County Medicaid Waiver Case Managers.



Medicaid Waiver Case Managers

Choctaw

Jennifer Hopkins, RN
Rachel Embry, LSW

Clay

Mitzi Phelps, RN
Kate Stuart, LSW

Lowndes #1

Libby Wansley, RN
Janice Miller, LSW

Lowndes #2

Carmen Ellis, RN
Lesia Wilson, LSW

Lowndes #3

Michelle Harris, RN
Angelia Sansing, LSW

Noxubee #1

Jana Peterson, RN
Beverly Baker, LSW

Noxubee #2

Tammy Castle, RN
Pamela Triplett, LSW

Oktibbeha #1

Tina McWhorter, RN
Lynn Herndon, LSW

Oktibbeha #2

Charlotte Dowd, RN
Jenny Grantham, LSW

Webster

Jean Jolly, RN
Chris Bingham, LSW

Winston

Kim Mills, RN
Lauren Smith, LSW

Planning . . .

HOUSING DEPARTMENT

CITY OF WEST POINT HOMEBUYER ASSISTANCE GRANT - Six (6) low-income families have each been provided \$14,999 in down payment assistance to purchase existing houses in the City of West Point. The City has available funds from Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) to assist approximately 11 more homebuyers. Potential homebuyers should contact a mortgage company to be preapproved for a loan; the City can provide the down payment assistance, if all other program requirements are met.

CITY OF LOUISVILLE HOMEBUYER ASSISTANCE GRANT - The City of Louisville has completed three (3) down payment assistance grants to help low income families in Louisville in purchasing existing houses. The City still has available funds for potential homebuyers who have been preapproved by a mortgage company for a loan. Contact Louisville City Hall for more information at 662-773-9201.

CHOCTAW COUNTY HOMEOWNER REHAB/RECONSTRUCTION GRANT - The Choctaw County Board of Supervisors has advertised and received sealed bids from contractors for reconstruction on four dilapidated housing units approved under its 2009 HOME grant. Construction on these houses should begin in the near future.

NOXUBEE COUNTY HOMEOWNER REHAB/RECONSTRUCTION GRANT - The Noxubee County Board of Supervisors has received bids for 3 houses and one mobile home to be reconstructed under its 2009 HOME grant. Rehabilitation will begin soon.

WINSTON COUNTY HOMEOWNER REHAB/RECONSTRUCTION GRANT - The Winston County Board of Supervisors will receive sealed bids on June 25 for reconstruction of four (4) houses under its 2009 HOME grant.

The 2010 HOME program application workshop will be held in Jackson on July 14. Staff from Golden Triangle PDD will attend this workshop. All other interested parties are encouraged to attend. Inquiries should be directed to Gloria Adams or Jackie Hendricks at 601-359-3179. New applications will be accepted by MDA September 1.

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program

The Mississippi Development Authority-Energy Division (MDA-ED) announced the release of a Funding Opportunity Announcement of the Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program. Municipalities and counties not funded directly by the United States Department of Energy (DOE) for energy efficient retrofits, replacement of inefficient traffic lighting and/or street lighting, and small scale renewable energy systems were eligible to apply. As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), Mississippi received a formula allocation of \$16.9 million, with \$7.3 million of these funds distributed directly to the state's ten largest counties, ten largest cities, and one tribal government. Remaining funds of \$6,892,319 were made available for distribution through a competitive application process. The maximum grant size was \$100,000 for municipalities and \$175,000 for counties. Applications submitted by GTPDD staff include:

- Choctaw County Retrofits for Five Buildings

Planning cont. . .

- Clay County Retrofits for Four Buildings
- Oktibbeha County Retrofits for Six Buildings
- Town of Crawford Retrofits for One Building, Two Well Pumps
- City of Macon Retrofits for Three Buildings
- Town of Noxapater Retrofits for One Building
- Town of Shuqualak Retrofits for Four Buildings

The intent of the ARRA funded EECBG program is to assist eligible entities in creating and implementing strategies to:

- Reduce fossil fuel emissions in a manner that is environmentally sustainable;
- Reduce the total energy consumption of the eligible entities; and
- Improve energy efficiency in the building sector, the transportation sector and other appropriate sectors.

Previously submitted applications did not utilize the entire grant award. Therefore, MDA-ED has announced the release of a Round 2 for approximately \$1,500,000 of funding for EECBG grants. Round 2 will be a scaled-back version of the first Funding Opportunity Announcement, only allowing energy efficiency improvements for public buildings. Due to federal deadlines, this will only be open for a short period of time and after that there will be no additional awards. This round is only available to those eligible cities and counties that did not apply for funds under the previous EECBG FOA. The deadline for submission of an application is July 7, 2010.

Baldor Electric Builds New Facility

The Baldor Electric Company in Columbus, Mississippi is completing its new facility near the Lowndes County Port. The Lowndes County Board of Supervisors was the recipient of a Community Development Block Grant of \$650,000.00 to complete site improvements for the facility. These changes included the construction of improved access roads and water service to the site. Pictured above is the project sign that identifies the funding and acknowledges the *Mississippi Development Authority* for its participation through the Mississippi Community Development Block Grant Program. In the background, progress on the new Baldor Building can be seen. Baldor Electric agreed to create thirty-eight new jobs at this new facility in addition to the jobs that will be moved to this new site as the old facility in east Columbus is vacated.



Pictured above are Harry Sanders, Lisa Younger Neese, Frank Ferguson, Ralph Billingsley, George Crawford and John Holliman.

Planning cont. . .

Mississippi Recreational Trails Program

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) recently announced the availability of grant funds through the Recreational Trails Program. A total of \$1,241,317 has been made available to governmental entities, colleges/universities, recreation districts or non-profit conservation organizations to provide and maintain recreational trails, both motorized and non-motorized, and trails-related facilities. The Recreational Trails Program is an assistance program of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration which requires a local match of at least 20%. The minimum grant award will be \$8,000 and the maximum grant award will be \$100,000 for non-motorized projects. There is no cap for motorized projects.

Golden Triangle Planning and Development District Planning Staff prepared the following applications for FY2010 funding:

Clay County Board of Supervisors
Pheba Recreational Trail
Grant Request - \$34,160; Local Match - \$9,040

Noxubee County Board of Supervisors
Multi-Purpose Trail
Grant Request- \$100,000; Local Match - \$20,000.

April Fool

Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson became the Executive Director of the Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc. on April 1st, 1990. Since this time, the GTPDD has grown in employee number by 1933% (no, this is not a typo), increasing from 12 staff members to 244 presently. Net Assets have increased by 776%, Total Assets by 820%. Thank you Rudy for your dedication and hard work. We appreciate you !!

GTPDD Staff

Looking for New Projects



Boss, there ain't no new projects in the ceiling! Sorry.



Celebrating



Plotting

WIA (Workforce Investment Act)

HOW DO SOUTHERNERS CELEBRATE SUCCESS? Food, Friends, and More Food!

That is just what the WIA (Workforce Investment Act) In-school Youth Program staff and students did to celebrate another highly productive year. Due to strong commitment by the students, diligent work of the WIA teachers, and cooperation of area business, 125 seniors completed the WIA class, 112 participated in the spring job placement program, and 102 participated in the June work program. Over \$170,000 was earned by these young people as they worked in their local communities. What a win-win situation!

Not only did the students have an opportunity to take skills learned in the classroom into actual job situations, the local businesses received free labor, as student salaries were paid through the Golden Triangle Planning & Development office. In addition, the 120 graduates from the 2008-2009 program year, who are part of the follow-up program, continued to make positive strides toward their future goals. According to quarterly updates, 90%, or 108 of the 120, are either in post-secondary education, employed, or in the active military. This is a success rate well worth celebration.

By now you are probably wondering “Exactly what is the WIA In-School Youth Program?” Simply stated, it is a transition class offered to seniors in the seven Golden Triangle counties that: teaches necessary skills for job success, offers paid job placement during the second half of the senior year, and provides services for the following twelve months to ensure students’ success in the transition into the real world of employment. If you know students who will be seniors in the fall 2010 semester, tell them about this wonderful opportunity so that come May 2011 they too can celebrate a very successful senior year.

For more information on the WIA In-School Youth Program call Mitzi Lawrence at 662-324-7860.

Staff Anniversaries

Staff members that have served
at least 5 years at the GTPDD.

APRIL

Keisha Cunningham	06 Years
Sherri Fowler	05 Years
Jennifer Hopkins	05 Years
Rupert L. “Rudy” Johnson	20 Years
Janet Taylor	08 Years

MAY

Vicki Clay	16 Years
Queenzella Gibson	05 Years
Melissa Long	08 Years
Earnestine Robinson	09 Years
Toby Sanford	06 Years
Lesa Wilson	06 Years

JUNE

Sherry Jobe	06 Years	Kenny Orr	08 Years
Minnie Lindsey	06 Years	Eyvonne Swanigan	05 Years
Tina McWhorter	10 Years	Mary Thompson	05 Years

WIA (Workforce Investment Act) cont. . .

SUMMER STEPS PROGRAM



Pictured front row: Breann Taylor, Clay Assistant; Leslie Scott, Clay Coordinator; Mitzi Lawrence, WIA Programs Director; Amy Roberson, Webster Assistance; Lynne Sneed, Lowndes Assistant.

Back row: Coretta Stockett, Noxubee Coordinator; Yvonne Sanders, Lowndes Coordinator; Debbie Gammill, Choctaw Assistant; Teresa Shumaker, Choctaw Coordinator; Dan Burchfield, Webster Coordinator; Shannon Smith, Winston Assistant; Kathy Humphries, Winston Coordinator; Erma Booth, Oktibbeha Assistant; Jennifer Howell, Oktibbeha Coordinator; Earnestine Shamily, Noxubee Assistant.

The Summer STEPS Program means the WIA Department is busier than ever as it screens applications, certifies participants, and completes documentation to place eligible participants on jobsites. The Summer STEPS program, funded through state TANF funds, is considerably different from the Summer Work Program that was administered through the GTPDD last summer. To be eligible for participation in the STEPS program an applicant must:

- Be 18 – 24 years of age
- Meet financial guidelines
- Be the parent of a child whom he/she lives with and provides for, OR
Be a student (high school or college) and dependent on parents.

Each county will be allotted 27 slots where participants can work 320 hours between June 28 and September 30 in a private business, manufacturing, or non-profit medical facility at no cost to the hiring entities. Over \$500,000 has been appropriated to pay wages and workers' comp insurance for STEP participants. Not only does the STEPS program provide a beneficial learning experience and sometimes a first job experience for the young adult, it provides a needed worker in the local community.

The GTPDD staff would like to thank all the businesses who are giving these young adults a chance to prove themselves, acquire valuable work experience, and earn paychecks.

You are making a difference in your community – THANK YOU!

From the Director, cont. . .

The GTPDD's GIS department saved one of its School Districts, and thereby saving taxpayer dollars, a sum of \$65,000 in one school year alone, by preparing county house locations for the school bus routes. This GIS system was built from scratch and also assisted the County with projects such as 911 addressing and routing, digital parcel and centerline development, garbage truck routing, and other time/dollar saving activities. (I recently accompanied the GIS staff to a conference in Pittsburgh, PA when ARC honored the GTPDD by requesting a presentation of the development of this system.)

From this example, you can see that Redistricting is not the only service that can be accomplished by a GIS system.

Other examples of uses of GIS information include:

- A meteorologist might study paths of hurricanes to predict where and when they might occur in the future.
- A Police Chief might study how crime patterns change from month to month to help decide where officers should be assigned.
- A retail analyst might map the change in store sales before and after a regional ad campaign to see where the ads were most effective.

If you want to discuss Redistricting, or other uses of a GIS program, call one of our planners (Phylis Benson, George Crawford, or Patsy Patterson) or Toby Sanford, GIS Manager at 324-7860.



Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc.

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