



Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson
Executive Director

Starkville Senior Enrichment Center Plaque Presentation

Retirees at the Senior Enrichment Center recently presented a plaque expressing appreciation to Rudy Johnson for providing the Senior Center since 2008. In early 2008, the MSU Extension Service Rural Health Program Leader, Dr. Bonnie Carew, sponsored a forum called "Smart Aging: Healthy Futures." Out of this endeavor the Starkville Senior Enrichment Center was born. Minnie Fox was one of the forum participants who led the "Senior Center Committee" to Rudy Johnson, Executive Director of the Golden Triangle Planning and Development District. Rudy graciously agreed to support the formation of the Senior Enrichment Center. The Center opened in June, 2008.



There are several good reasons Starkville needs a Senior Center.

- Everyone needs some form of play as part of their life's routine. Play is an important part of what helps keep people of all ages healthy.
- Research clearly shows that social interaction fosters healthy mindsets, so being with others helps people stay healthier as they age and leads to a higher quality of life.
- The Senior Center atmosphere is one that recognizes the value of aging citizens and affirms the self-worth of older adults.
- Providing a place where senior adults can spend quality time together speaks volumes

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GTPDD Anniversaries

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



about Starkville as an aging-friendly community where retirees love to live.



U.S. Census numbers indicate that the largest percentage of the population is quickly becoming those age sixty and older. At the same time the numbers of the nation's youngest citizens are shrinking. Most of the upcoming retirees are able-bodied and have provided well for themselves and will likely live for thirty more years.

With Census data in mind, many leaders are making sure that their communities are becoming aging-friendly places where retirees have opportunities to make their retirement years the most fun and most rewarding time of life.

The Senior Enrichment Center began with a monthly calendar full of presentations, game days, and potlucks and has evolved into spirited table game groups who make the most of a good time every time they meet. Marie Mestas is the energy source for 'Stitching with Marie' on Wednesdays where a lively group enjoys every kind of stitching known. Jigsaw puzzles are a favorite of some visitors and a huge puzzle collection has become a puzzle lending library. There are snacks and drinks in the 'fridge and some days folks bring delicious snacks to share.

Most visitors will say that their most treasured benefit of coming to the Senior Center is the friends they've made. So many good stories can be told about paths that have crossed and left indelible positive impressions on people's hearts and minds.

One story is about a Starkville resident's sister from Michigan visiting her here last year. The Starkville

resident brought her sister with her to the Senior Center and the Michigan sister taught everyone to play a card game, which has become a favorite. What a great gift for a visitor to share such a fun experience that continues to bring enjoyment long after her visit is over! The group sent a card recently to the Michigan sister just to say hello.

Recently two ladies, meeting for the first time, were chatting about being born in Starkville, then, as adults, both lived in fairly close proximity to each other in Detroit, but did not know the other was there. Now they have both retired and both are back in Starkville - getting acquainted at the Senior Center!

And then there are those precious friendships of some who are no longer here, who are missed so much, (but with the joyous hope that we'll all get to visit again someday). They're talked about from time to time by sharing a special happy remembrance or two.

The Senior Center is all about crossing paths with wonderful folks who make each other's lives good. Somebody said that friendship is the thread that ties hearts together and that adage is certainly true for aging friends who meet at the Senior Enrichment Center.



MORE INFORMATION TO COME. . . .
ALZHEIMER'S AWARENESS CLASSES
ALZHEIMER'S 2015 WALK

alz.org | **alzheimer's association**

Aging. . .

How Can I Help Prevent Healthcare FRAUD?

With identity theft and healthcare fraud on the rise, many individuals have questions about ways to safeguard personal healthcare information. Below are a few suggestions to help you keep your Personal Healthcare information safe:

- The best way to prevent fraud is to keep personal information secure and private. Do not share this information with anyone except your healthcare provider. Never give this information over the phone or over unsecure internet connections.
- Always keep a record of your healthcare visits, services received and equipment provided for healthcare needs. Also, keep copies of notices from insurance companies, Medicare, hospitals, doctors, pharmacies and payment receipts for these services.
- Match payments with bills to safeguard against duplicate charges, charges for items you did not get, and services that were not ordered by you or for you.

Your health benefits are yours and it is perfectly acceptable to ask questions of your provider or plan representative if something does not make sense or may be incorrect. If you are unable to resolve these issues, a volunteer from the Senior Medicare Patrol Program will be glad to assist you.

NEWS FROM THE COLUMBUS SENIOR ENRICHMENT CENTER.....

Spring has sprung, bringing showers (a month early) and a flurry of activity at the Senior Center! This is the time of year when many of the clubs, philanthropic organizations, and service leagues are busy with their end of year projects, some are changing leadership positions, and others are just getting started on implementing projects and programs.

Thankfully, there are many organizations, clubs, and individuals among us that give of their time, talent, money or some other gift to make a difference in a

meaningful way. These people are filling a niche, or special area of demand for something needed.

Where do all of these service oriented, caring, giving people come from? The MAJORITY are comprised of SENIOR adults! Senior adults are vital, active members of the community. Many are retired. Sometimes, there is the tendency to think of the retired in terms of a group of folks sitting at home watching TV, reading the paper, taking two naps a day, and growing old, while drawing Social Security and/or a retirement check. That could not be further from the truth! Many, many, many of the retired are leading busier lives than they did before retirement! They are keeping active by contributing to society in positive, tangible, meaningful ways.

The GTPDD, Inc. Senior Enrichment Center in Columbus is fortunate to be able to provide a place for some of these groups to meet occasionally. To every Senior out there who is involved in making life a better place for someone or something else, kudos to you!!! Give yourself a huge pat on the back. Thank you for what you do! You are making a huge difference in this world, friends!

Below is a photo of a local P.E.O. chapter. This stands for Philanthropic Educational Organization where women celebrate the advancement of women; educate women through scholarships, grants, awards, loans, and stewardship of Cottey College; and motivate women to achieve their highest aspirations. Mississippi has 23 chapters and 714 members throughout the state. The second photo is their guest, Sadhana Thapa, a native of Nepal, and International Student at M. U.W. in Columbus.



Loans. . .

Business Loan Programs

Golden Triangle Planning and Development District, Inc. continues to promote economic development through the use of four low interest revolving loan programs designed to supplement, but not replace, other commercial financing sources such as banks.

To date, GTPDD has approved funding of \$17,114,333.85 to 166 businesses located within its seven-county district. As a result of this funding, 1,856 new jobs were created and 1,319 existing employees were retained by the new or expanding businesses.

Loan program funding may be provided in amounts ranging from \$2,000 up to \$250,000 depending on the eligibility of a project. As of March 15, 2015, the interest rate on GTPDD loan programs was as low as 3.25% fixed for the entire term of the loan up to a maximum term of fifteen years.

Funding from these programs may be used to provide a portion of the borrowed funds for a project to start a new business or to expand an existing business. Most of the time, GTPDD will establish a partnership with a commercial bank that will provide the additional borrowed funds.

An eligibility requirement to receive funding through these revolving loan programs is that the project must create and/or retain jobs within the seven-county district.

For more information, contact Jimmy Cole, Loan Officer at (662) 320-2000, ext 1133.

COUNTY	NUMBER OF LOANS	JOBS CREATED	JOBS RETAINED	AMOUNT
CHOCTAW	08	252	016	\$2,010,000.00
CLAY	15	105	045	\$996,638.50
LOWNDES	59	451	621	\$6,035,840.00
NOXUBEE	16	132	154	\$1,183,500.00
OKTIBBEHA	40	629	184	\$4,153,563.75
WEBSTER	09	054	256	\$1,099,950.00
WINSTON	19	233	043	\$1,634,841.60
TOTALS	166	1856	1319	\$17,114,333.85

Medicaid Waiver . .

The Elderly and Disabled Medicaid Waiver Program is a Long Term Care Program which offers services in the home of clients in order to prevent or delay institutional placement.

Services Offered:

- Case Management
- Home Delivered Meals
- Personal Care Services
- In-Home Respite
- Expanded Home Health (including Home Health Aide Services)
- Adult Day Care

Qualifications:

- Be 21 years of age or older
- Score 50 or above on the Preadmission Screening Tool, which assesses the client's ability to care for themselves and their environment.
- Qualify for Long Term Care Medicaid (income less than \$2,199 per month and resources less than \$4,000).

Fourteen Case Management teams currently serve the Golden Triangle Planning and Development District (GTPDD). Each team consists of a registered nurse and a licensed social worker who visit the client on a monthly basis to provide, monitor, and coordinate the services that are offered through this program. The GTPDD serves clients in Choctaw, Clay, Lowndes, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Webster, and Winston counties.

Michelle Harris is the RN Supervisor for the Medicaid Waiver Program. Current Case Management team members are:

Choctaw

Tina Gill, RN
Rachel Embry, LSW

Lowndes #3

Lindsey Marsh, RN
Angelia Sansing, LSW

Clay

Mitzi Phelps, RN
Stephanie Cannon, LSW

Lowndes #4

Christy Massey, RN

Lowndes #1

Libby Wansley, RN
Audie Strain, LSW

Noxubee #1

Jana Peterson, RN
Jessica Henry, LSW

Lowndes #2

Cindy Reese, RN
Janice Miller, LSW

Noxubee #2

Tammy Castle, RN
Jennifer Bridges, LSW

Oktibbeha #1

Tina McWhorter, RN
Lynn Herndon, LSW

Oktibbeha #2

Stacy Elkins, RN
Jennifer Grantham, LSW

Oktibbeha #3

Helen Smith, RN
Beverly Baker, LSW

Oktibbeha #4

Amanda McCrary, RN
Suzy Winstead, LSW

Webster

Lynette Hunt, RN
Lesa Wilson, LSW

Winston

Kim Mills, RN
Lauren Smith, LSW

If you would like more information on the Elderly and Disabled Medicaid Waiver, please call 662-324-7860, option #3.

Planning. . .

FY2015 CDBG Applications Due May 11-15, 2015

Local units of government should plan immediately for the upcoming FY15 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application process. CDBG Public Facilities applications will be accepted by the Mississippi Development Authority from May 11 - 15, 2015.

The FY2015 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Final Statement outlining the application process for this year has been released by the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA). The minimum threshold requirements are that at least 51% of the project beneficiaries be of low and moderate income and applicants must have no open Public Facility (Regular or Small Government), Emergency/Urgent Needs, or Self Help grants and have no unresolved audit or monitoring findings. This year's allocation from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is projected to be \$23,051,271.

It is important for governmental entities to remember that the Community Services Division of MDA must receive an audit-reporting package within nine (9) months following the end of the fiscal year. The Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133 require a single audit for state and local governments, which expend \$500,000 or more in federal awards for that year. Entities, which expend less than \$500,000 a year in federal awards, are exempt from federal audit requirements for that year, but an acceptable Funding Certification Form must be submitted to MDA.* Failure to provide this information to the Mississippi Development Authority in a timely manner will **disqualify** an applicant from submitting a CDBG application during the fiscal year. Any governmental entity needing assistance with this matter should contact the PDD.

*Note: This limit changes to \$750,000 annually, effective January 1, 2015.

April is Fair Housing Month

History of Fair Housing

On April 11, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which was meant as a follow-up to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The 1968 act expanded on previous acts and prohibited discrimination concerning the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin, sex, (and as amended) handicap and family status. Title VIII of the Act is also known as the Fair Housing Act (of 1968).

The enactment of the federal Fair Housing Act on April 11, 1968 came only after a long and difficult journey. From 1966-1967, Congress regularly considered the fair housing bill, but failed to garner a strong enough majority for its passage. However, when the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson utilized this national tragedy to urge for the bill's speedy Congressional approval. Since the 1966 open housing marches in Chicago, Dr. King's name had been closely associated with the fair housing legislation. President Johnson viewed the Act as a fitting memorial to the man's life work, and wished to have the Act passed prior to Dr. King's funeral in Atlanta.

Another significant issue during this time period was the growing casualty list from Vietnam. The deaths in Vietnam fell heaviest upon young, poor African-American and Hispanic infantrymen. However, on the home front, these men's families could not purchase or rent homes in certain residential developments on account of their race or national origin. Specialized organizations like the NAACP, the GI Forum and the National Committee Against Discrimination In Housing lobbied hard for the Senate to pass the Fair Housing Act and remedy this inequity. Senators Edward Brooke and Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts argued deeply for the passage of this legislation. In particular, Senator Brooke, the first African-American ever to be elected to the Senate by popular vote, spoke personally of his return from World War II and inability to provide a home of his choice for his new family because of his race.

With the cities rioting after Dr. King's assassination, and destruction mounting in every part of the United States, the words of President Johnson and Congressional leaders rang the Bell of Reason for the House of Representatives, who subsequently passed the Fair Housing Act. Without debate, the Senate followed the House in its passage of the Act, which President Johnson then signed into law.

The power to appoint the first officials administering the Act fell upon President Johnson's successor, Richard Nixon. President Nixon tapped then Governor of Michigan, George Romney, for the post of Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. While serving as Governor, Secretary Romney had successfully campaigned for ratification of a state constitutional provision that prohibited discrimination in housing. President Nixon also appointed Samuel Simmons as the first Assistant Secretary for Equal Housing Opportunity.

When April 1969 arrived, HUD could not wait to celebrate the Act's 1st Anniversary. Within that inaugural year, HUD completed the Title VIII Field Operations Handbook, and instituted a formalized complaint process. In truly festive fashion, HUD hosted a gala event in the Grand Ballroom of New York's Plaza Hotel. From across the nation, advocates and politicians shared in this marvelous evening, including one of the organizations that started it all -- the National Committee Against Discrimination In Housing.

In subsequent years, the tradition of celebrating Fair Housing Month grew larger and larger. Governors began to issue proclamations that designated April as "Fair Housing Month," and schools across the country sponsored poster and essay contests that focused upon fair housing issues. Regional winners from these contests often enjoyed trips to Washington, DC for events with HUD and their Congressional representatives.

Under former Secretaries James T. Lynn and Carla Hills, with the cooperation of the National Association of Homebuilders, National Association of Realtors, and the American Advertising Council these groups adopted fair housing as their theme and provided "free" billboard space throughout the nation. These large 20-foot by 14-foot billboards placed the fair housing message in neighborhoods, industrial centers, agrarian regions and urban cores. Every region also had its own celebrations, meetings, dinners, contests and radio-television shows that featured HUD, state and private fair housing experts and officials. These celebrations continue the spirit behind the original passage of the Act, and are remembered fondly by those who were there from the beginning.

(Source: HUD)



U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development



**EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY**

**We Do Business in Accordance With the Federal Fair
Housing Law**

(The Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988)

**It is illegal to Discriminate Against Any Person
Because of Race, Color, Religion, Sex,
Handicap, Familial Status, or National Origin**

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> In the sale or rental of housing or residential lots | <input type="checkbox"/> In the provision of real estate brokerage services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In advertising the sale or rental of housing | <input type="checkbox"/> In the appraisal of housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In the financing of housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Blockbusting is also illegal |

Anyone who feels he or she has been
discriminated against may file a complaint of
housing discrimination:

1-800-669-9777 (Toll Free)

1-800-927-9275 (TTY)

www.hud.gov/fairhousing

**U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development
Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and
Equal Opportunity
Washington, D.C. 20410**

WIA

(Workforce Investment Act) . . .

This Is What It's All About

Youth in the WIA Counseling to Career Program report that they are experiencing, for the first time in their lives:

- Exhilaration of being hired for a first job
- Anticipation of first work day
- Nervousness and excitement upon entering the work place door for the first time
- Learning coworkers' and supervisors' names
- Acceptance and encouragement by coworkers
- Holding the first paycheck in hand
- Calculating and recalculating amount of first paycheck
- Surprise and horror at the deductions in the first paycheck
- Buying something with "my own money"

C2C participants from Choctaw, Oktibbeha, Webster and Winston counties receive 21 hours of work ethics training before beginning the work experience component of the program. Through a partnering of businesses in the four counties and the GTPDD, each student is allowed to work a maximum of 180 hours. Participating businesses gain the service of an employee, whose salary and workers' comp are paid through the WIA program. In exchange, the youth is provided a real work experience with potential for continued employment, unsubsidized, on his or her merit.

THANK YOU, AREA EMPLOYERS, FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



CHANGING TIMES

If nothing ever changed, there'd be no butterflies.

~Author Unknown



The GTPDD youth program is experiencing yet another change. For the past fifteen (15) years Golden Triangle PDD has administered a variety of youth work training programs funded through the Workforce Investment Act which was passed in 1998. In January Congress passed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) which will replace WIA July 1, 2015. The GTPDD staff is in the process of submitting a proposal for the new Counseling to Career Program (C2C) which will operate under WIOA regulations. If funded, the program will provide job skills training, educational services, referrals, and job placement for a specified number of hours to out-of-school youth ages 16-24 who meet federal guidelines. Funding announcements are scheduled to be made by June 30, 2015.

The GTPDD staff thanks all of you who have participated in the WIA program, both participants and businesses. GTPDD hopes to continue the partnership developed over the past years; if funding is received, additional WIOA program information will be provided in the June newsletter. GTPDD knows that working together with you, area employers, the WIOA Counseling to Career program can develop from a cocoon to a butterfly, meeting the needs of the youth and businesses in local communities.

Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc.

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Staff Anniversaries

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

January

Phylis Benson	21 years
Janice Davis	07 years
Robert Dill	07 years
Jessie Evans	16 years
Jacqueline Jackson	06 years
Tricia Jones	21 years
Jennifer Lindsey	06 years
Rosie Spencer	12 years
Dora McFarland	05 years
Debbie McKee	19 years
Liz Wyatt	15 years

February

George Crawford	37 years
Lorene Cummins	11 years
Vivian Evans	05 years
Jenny Grantham	11 years
Michelle Harris	12 years
Lynn Herndon	09 years
Jana Peterson	06 years
Scott Stewart	07 years
Mary Ann Thompson	10 years
Libby Wansley	10 years
Queen Wilson	08 years

March

Ella Bell	06 years
Jimmy Cole	21 years
Ida Eacholes	05 years
Stephanie Fenton	11 years
Bobby Gann	41 years
Ethel Goss	12 years
Carla Guyton	06 years
Dixie Higginbotham	09 years
Jennifer Odom	08 years
Barbara Ray	16 years
Tekela Taylor	07 years



Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc.

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