

# Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc.

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Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson Executive Director

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### From the Director. . . . .

It is no secret that the community elderly, and their basic needs, are dear to my heart. As you review the services the GTPDD and Area Agency on Aging provide to seniors in the area, think in terms of "retain my dignity and independence, remain in my home longer, and lead a meaningful life," because that is what we attempt to do for our valuable aging citizens. Do we take for granted 1) living in our own homes? 2) preparing our own food, 3 times a day? 3) driving wherever we please? 4) washing dishes and vacuuming when we choose? 5) seeking medical care with little regard for cost? 6) socializing with friends and family? *Do we take these for granted*? (And, the list could go on.) At some point in our lives this will probably change, and no longer will we have the assurance that we can do it by ourselves.

And, how do we help seniors to satisfy this desire to remain independent and care for themselves in their own homes? We act as advocates for them in an attempt to alleviate some of their needs. Let's take a look at the GTPDD/AAA programs to this end:

<u>**Case Management.**</u> A RN and licensed social worker team "manage cases," in that the team identifies and evaluates potential clients for Medicaid eligibility for appropriate services. (See <u>**Outreach & I & R**</u> for non-Medicaid eligible clients). The team then refers a qualified client to those services, or in some cases, an outside community agency (such as home health). The team monitors clients monthly to determine if there are additional needs. If the client must ultimately enter a care facility, the team can help with that transition.

**Outreach** & **Information and Referral**. Similar in scope, these programs link seniors to appropriate programs. By screening to understand a client's situation and identify the needs, explaining the resources available, and referring client to those services, staff have taken steps to alleviate some of the problems seniors encounter.

**Nutrition.** Perhaps the most visible assistance we offer is the meals program. Studies show that a healthy diet is especially critical as we age. Sometimes the one meal a day that we provide (planned with good nutritional criteria) is the only meal a recipient has that day; and the deliverer may be the only social contact the recipient has during the week. Some areas have a congregate site, where seniors can enjoy the meal with other seniors, for those who are able to travel; a bonus here is the fellowship and activities available. Congregate meals are available to all residents who are at least 60 years of age, and the spouse (any age) of that person; home-delivered meals are available only to those seniors who are age 60 or older.

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**Personal Care Attendants (PCAs).** The former Homemaker Program, which allowed light housekeeping, laundry, and grocery shopping, expanded into Personal Care Attendants for Medicaid-eligible clients. PCAs can perform the same services as did the Homemakers, as well as cooking meals, bathing/dressing clients, running errands, and escorting clients to medical appointments. Homemaker Services, limited to light housekeeping, is still available to non-Medicaid seniors.

- **<u>Respite.</u>** Who, when charged with the almost complete care of another, has not yearned for a brief rest? A respite from the responsibility, a recharging of the mind, a refreshing with a little time alone, knowing that the loved one is still in good care? Our respite staff provides relief for the primary caregiver for a few hours, so the caregiver can have a break. Respite service is available for Medicaid and non-Medicaid seniors.
- <u>Medication Delivery.</u> Yes, we have our own **PHARMACY**, a homedelivery pharmacy, taking medication prescriptions to clients' homes. Easy-to-open packets have the date and time of each dose, making it easy for patients and caregivers to see if there are missed doses and when the next dose should be taken. These packets increase patient compliance, which is often critical to good health maintenance, as it is so easy to track

dosage. The once-a-month medication delivery solves many problems: transportation to pick up prescriptions (sometimes multiple trips in a month), finding someone in some cases to make the trips to the drugstore, preparing pill planners, or leaving a homebound loved one alone to make those necessary trip(s). (NOTE: Anyone is eligible for pharmacy delivery services.)



- Insurance Counseling. Confused about health insurance? (I get confused about my auto insurance coverage!) Who isn't, when one becomes Medicare eligible, and then finds out all that Medicare does NOT cover? Okay, shop around. How do you know what to shop for? I wouldn't, without some help. The GTPDD does not endorse any insurance, or any insurance company. It does, however, provide an **Insurance Counselor** well acquainted with how the insurance supplement system works. Counseling is personalized: specific person, specific situation, specific problem, and best insurance choices available to that person. After assisting the client in coverage choice(s), and alerting the client to future changes and deadlines, the Counselor can help to enroll the client in his choice(s), should he request this aid. The Counselor screens clients who may need a hand in paying for their coverage, and assists them in applying to programs such as Extra Help with Prescription Drug Coverage through Social Security, the Medicare Savings Program, or Medicaid programs through the Division of Medicaid.
- **Transportation.** Lowndes and Noxubee counties, as well as the City of Starkville, provide local match to our funds in order for seniors to be able to get to doctor appointments, grocery stores, etc.
- <u>Elder Abuse Prevention.</u> Suspected elder abuse that is reported to our office is referred to Adult Protective Services Office at MDHS in Jackson. MDHS investigates and takes any action required.

**Legal Services.** The GTPDD/AAA contracts with North Mississippi Rural Legal Services to provide basic legal services to seniors in the area, all of which are free to the elderly. Among documents that can be prepared are wills, durable powers of attorney, foreclosures, and Advanced Directives for Healthcare. [An Advanced Directive for Healthcare is sometimes called "a living will, a healthcare proxy, or medical power of attorney." An advanced directive is to be followed by family and physicians, when the person is no longer able to make decisions for himself. An advanced directive can state 1) At what point extraordinary measures will cease (resuscitation, nutrition/hydration tubes, etc., 2) If the person wishes to be an organ donor or donate his body to science, and 3) any other instructions the patient would like to give for the time when he is no longer able to make healthcare choices.] More details about Legal Services in the next issue of this Newsletter. See sidebar.

**Employment Training.** Imagine yourself in your mid-fifties, with no income through a spousal death, company layoff, or whatever misfortune occurred. Add to that, possessing very few marketable skills that are useful in today's economic structure. A horrible dilemma, huh? Well, the PDD can offer some help in Lowndes County. Under our SCSEP program, citizens who are age 55 or older, who meet certain financial criteria, are eligible for part-time minimum wage "training opportunities." Local governments and non-profits host these workers for clerical, security, maintenance, etc. jobs, and train them, so that their skill set is improved and they have a greater chance of finding permanent positions after the year's training period is completed. Some of the host employers over the years have been Palmer Home, Contact Helpline, Town of Crawford, and MUW. [NOTE: For information on SCSEP in other GTPDD counties, you may contact **Experience Works**.]

**Ombudsman.** What is an ombudsman? Oh, how many times have I answered that question! A Long-Term Ombudsman is an advocate for residents in nursing and assisted living facilities. Advocacy means assuring that these facilities protect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of residents. It also means meeting and developing trust with the residents and facility administrators. When a problem is reported, the ombudsman must investigate, interviewing parties concerned, then work to resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the resident. The City of Starkville boasts 2 new care facilities: The Bee Hive Home and The Claiborne at Adelaide.

As you can see, the needs of the elderly are not only close to my heart, they are our daily walk. Reflect on these available services; share them with those in your community. My desire is to provide opportunities for every elderly individual to live a full, independent life.

#### North Mississippi Rural Legal Services

will be at the Senior Center in Columbus on Friday, April 15, 2016. They will be preparing LIVING WILLS, ADVANCE DIRECTIVES, and POWER OF ATTORNEY documents for Senior Adults

who are 60 years or older. If you are interested in having one or all of these documents prepared <u>AT NO CHARGE</u>,

Please call Carla Guyton at 662-386-0001 or 662-328-0437.

(BY APPOINTMENT ONLY)

#### Friends, please note:

-Case Managers come to YOUR HOME

-Meals are delivered to YOUR HOME

-Information on services can be obtained by YOUR TELE-PHONE

-Personal Care Attendants come to YOUR HOME

-Prescriptions can be delivered to YOUR HOME

-Transportation begins with pickup at YOUR HOME

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# **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.

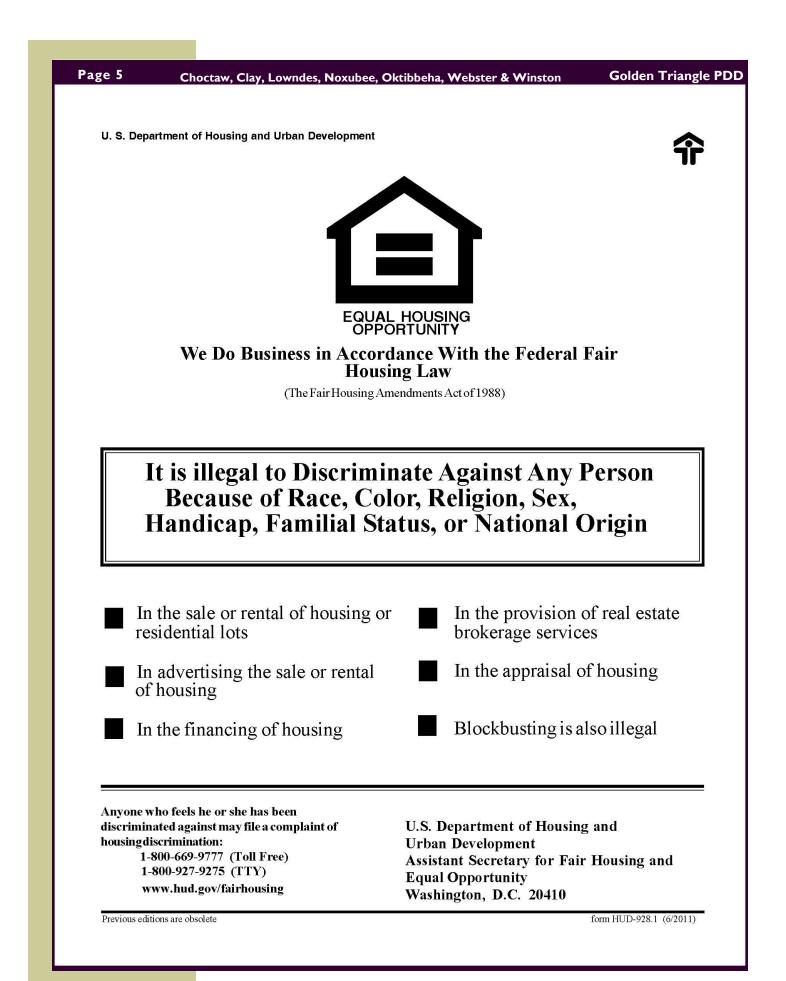
The power to appoint the first officials administering the Act fell upon President Johnson's successor, Richard Nixon. President Nixon tapped then Governor of Michigan, George Romney, for the post of Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. While serving as Governor, Secretary Romney had successfully 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)



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### FY2016 CDBG Applications Due May 11-15, 2016

Local units of government should plan immediately for the upcoming FY16 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application process. CDBG Public Facilities applications will be accepted by the Mississippi Development Authority from May 09 - 13, 2016.

The FY2016 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) 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 \$23,315,139.

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 <u>Funding Certification Form</u> 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, 2016.

#### Mississippi Development Authority Reviews Projects In the Golden Triangle Industrial Park

Two companies in the Golden Triangle Industrial Park, located near the Steel Dynamics Steel Mill in Lowndes County, were recently reviewed for closeout by staff of the Community Services Division of the Mississippi Development Authority; approval was granted. The Mississippi Steel Processing and New Process Steel companies were the beneficiaries of grants from the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and programs of the Mississippi Development Authority. The Lowndes County Board of Supervisors was instrumental in sponsoring several applications that provided grant funds and the matching required for constructing a new rail spur, loading pad and access roads for the two companies. Pictured is the new access road that serves these companies and provides a north entrance to the Steel Dynamics site. The new access road is known as North Steel Road. "CDBG Public Facilities Applications Due May 11-15, 2016."



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IS IT YOURS? IS IT MINE?

(If it is yours, can we share?)

A co-worker recently intrigued me with his account of a monetary windfall for his family. It seems that his Uncle Marvin, who lived alone, was a very private person, refusing to share anything but the most basic facts about his personal finances. When Uncle Marvin died, his brothers and only heirs settled the small estate (a house and checking account). Some months later, another relative found his name listed in the Unclaimed Property section of the Mississippi State Treasurer's website. The brother heirs investigated, and sure enough it was Uncle Marvin. The family, after proper documentation was presented, was awarded the funds.

This spurred me to check the website on behalf of my family. And, nice surprise, I discovered the name of a deceased relative and contacted her heir, who is in the process of completing the necessary paperwork.

It comes to mind the situation of a Noxubee County resident who lost her job in a mass plant layoff. Our Rapid Response team was assisting her in her work search and the team leader found her name in the Unclaimed Property list. And, then there is the employee who saw a relative's name who had moved to Texas, leaving a utility deposit behind.

The website <u>www.treasurerlynnfitch.com</u> lists the name and town and denotes whether the property is less than \$100 or more than \$100. Clicking the name takes the user to the application.

According to the Website, under "About the Unclaimed Property Division", it is required by law that "holders such as banks, credit unions, insurance companies, retail stores, utility companies, and business associations turn over to the Office of the State Treasurer any assets such as cash, checks or stocks that have been abandoned for which there has been no contact for a period of five years. The Unclaimed Property Division is charged with trying to locate the rightful owners of such assets."

In a 9/28/15 Press Release, Mississippi State Treasurer Lynn Fitch said "One in five Mississippians has unclaimed property." She is quoted in the 4/10/15 edition of the Columbus Commercial Dispatch "Sometimes people have no heirs left and no one left in the state. We do a lot of research trying to find people. But when (an unclaimed property case) gets too old, it gets hard to make that connection." A recent random search of the website revealed \$1703 unclaimed in Noxubee County and \$3244 unclaimed in Clay County.

So, readers pass the word, check the website, watch for publication of lists in your local newspapers. And, if you find a familiar name, but the address seems unlikely, don't give up; ours is a mobile society, and addresses often change.

You or a relative or friend just might get lucky.



Sources: www.treasurerlynnfitch.com

Mississippi State Treasury Press Release 9/18/15 Columbus Commercial Dispatch, 4/10/15

Submitted by a GTPDD staff member

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### What Is Happening in WIOA? Out-of-School Youth Program

Spring brings new growth, a fresh beginning, and the feeling of good times ahead. What better time to start a job, especially your first job? Sixteen youth in the WI-OA (Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act) Counseling to Career work ethics classes are doing exactly that! Youth in Choctaw, Oktibbeha, Webster, and Winston counties have begun the work experience component of their program through partnering with businesses in the GTPDD service area. Each eligible student is allowed to work approximately 180 hours. Those businesses that participate gain the service of an employee whose salary and workers' comp insurance are paid through WIOA funds, in exchange for providing the student with real work experience

First paychecks were delivered to WIOA participants last week and there were so many positive comments; not only from the youth, but from jobsite supervisors. The WIOA program seems to be a winwin situation for all involved. Youth Corey said, "I've really enjoyed my job at Louisville Housing Authority. This has been one of the greatest experiences. I've learned so much." "I am so glad I took part in the Counseling to Career program. What I learned through my job working with Webster County Supervisors helped me land a full-time job with North American Coal. If I hadn't participated in the WIOA program I would probably still be home sitting on my couch." said Sean. Desirae said that she enjoyed her job at the daycare and thinks it is the career for her. Scott Broughton, Broken Wings Thrift Store, recently complimented the WIOA office: "My appreciation to the WIOA Program for assigning Eric to our store. Recently we had a

cutback in employees, and Eric helped fill that void. We need more good young men like Eric. Much success to the WIOA Program in the future".

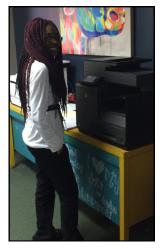
Job sites are now being developed for work experience scheduled to start in May. Golden Triangle PDD thanks all businesses participating in this effort. If you know of a business that would like to participate, please call Mitzi Lawrence at 662-324-7860 ext. 1128.

## City of Starkville's Summer Youth Program for In-School Youth

GTPDD is once again submitting a grant application to the Mississippi Department of Transportation on behalf of the City of Starkville for summer work program funding. Funding announcements should be made by mid-April. At that time the City of Starkville will make known eligibility requirements, as well as when and where applications will be available.







# **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 \$17,039,333.85 to 166 businesses located within its sevencounty 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, 2016, 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. I 133.

COUNTY	NUMBER OF LOANS	JOBS CREATED	JOBS RETAINED	AMOUNT
СНОСТАЖ	8	252	16	\$ 2,010,000.00
CLAY	15	105	45	\$ 996,638.50
LOWNDES	59	451	621	\$ 6,035,840.00
NOXUBEE	16	132	154	\$ 1,183,500.00
OKTIBBEHA	40	629	184	\$ 4,078,563.75
WEBSTER	9	54	256	\$ 1,099,950.00
WINSTON	19	233	43	\$ 1,634,841.60
TOTALS	166	1856	1319	\$ 17,039,333.85

Choctaw, Clay, Lowndes, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Webster & Winston

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### 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 presented 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 a daily 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 selfworth of older adults.
- Providing a place where senior adults can spend quality time together speaks volumes 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.

#### Golden Triangle PDD

Choctaw, Clay, Lowndes, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Webster & Winston

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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 whenever 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!

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.

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). In special moments, from time to time, happy remembrances of them are shared.

# In Loving Memory of Kay Hardy 1933—2013 Her Friendship Blessed Everyone She



GTPDD-GIS Department has been extremely busy completing the E911 addressing in Clay County. Over **8,192** address notification cards have been mailed to citizens. The E911 address will become effective with the US Postal Service within the next month.



Ella Bell	07 years
Jimmy Cole	22 years
Ida Eacholes	06 years
Stephanie Fenton	12 years
Bobby Gann	42 years
Ethel Goss	13 years
Carla Guyton	07 years
Jennifer Odom	09 years
Barbara Ray	17 years
Tekela Taylor	08 years

### Staff Anniversaries

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

April 1st is the 26th Anniversary for Rudy Johnson, as Executive Director of the GTPDD.

Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc.

Post Office Box 828 Starkville, MS 39760