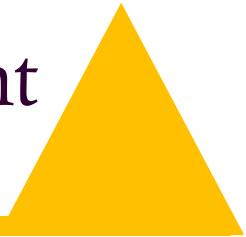




Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc.



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From the Director

Readers, let me quote from a prior Newsletter, in order to introduce my present concerns: "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: **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."

I also discussed all the services in detail that we provide to our community elderly in an effort that they are able to live, as closely as possible, to the way we, their children and grandchildren, enjoy living and the way they once lived, independent in every way.

Plus, they made a living for us, cleaned up after us, drove us to school and after school activities, made our beds, washed and ironed our clothes, taught us to love each other and to pray. The list is endless.

Like you and I, they want to live in their own homes, surrounded by the familiar: family pictures, the creaky but still loved rocking chair, a trek to the mailbox, flowers in the neighbor's yard, a

favorite coffee cup, roar of a law mower in the distance, a beloved voice from the next room, rain on the roof, birds frolicking in their birdbath, a UPS delivery from a child far away, and all the other treasures and memories from a lifetime that mean "home." Sure, they may require a walker, or need assistance with bathing, housecleaning, cooking. Perhaps they need someone to drive them to the doctor or shop for groceries. But, they are still at "home."

Now some of their already limited independence is being threatened.

Without home-delivered meals and the other services provided to our elderly, there would be a greater need for nursing homes. People have to eat. Will the money saved on meals be enough to fund the nursing homes that will be needed? I think not.

Please talk to your Senators and Representatives and spread the word among your friends about the dire need of keeping the Meals Programs for our elderly.

On behalf of your parents and grandparents, I thank you.

Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson



Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson
Executive Director

April is Fair Housing Month

History of Fair Housing

*"The
enactmen
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federal
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)

The Elderly & Disabled Waiver Program

The Elderly and Disabled Waiver program provides home and community-based services to individuals over the age of 21 whom, but for the provision of such services, would require the level of care provided in a nursing home facility. Beneficiaries of this waiver must qualify for Medicaid as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or meet the income and resource eligibility requirements for income level up to 300% of the SSI Federal Benefit Rate and meet medical criteria of the program, with a score of 50.

The Elderly and Disabled Waiver program is administered directly by the Home and Community Based Services Division (HCBS). Case Management services are provided by the Planning and Development Districts. The case management team is composed of a registered nurse and a licensed social worker who are responsible for identifying, screening and completing an assessment on individuals in need of at-home services. Upon approval of the HCBS, the case managers can refer qualified individuals to the following services: adult day care, home-delivered meals, personal care services, non-emergency escorted transportation, in-home respite, and extended home health visits.

The Golden Triangle Planning and Development District's Case Management Services are provided to all counties in our district, including: Choctaw, Clay, Lowndes, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Webster and Winston County.

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

Choctaw

Tina Gill, RN
Rachel Embry, LSW

Clay

Mitzi Phelps, RN
Lesa Wilson, LSW

Lowndes #1

Brandy Clark, RN
Audie Strain, LSW

Lowndes #2

Cindy Reese, RN
Tonia Davis, LSW

Lowndes #3

Lindsey Marsh, RN
Angelia Sansing, LSW

Lowndes #4

Blair Gerrish, RN
Lynn Herndon, LSW

Noxubee #1

Jana Peterson, RN
Jessica Spears, LSW

Noxubee #2

Tammy Castle, RN
Jennifer Bridges, LSW

Oktibbeha #1

Tina McWhorter, RN
Suzy Winstead, LSW

Oktibbeha #2

Stacy Elkins, RN
Jennifer Grantham, LSW

Oktibbeha #3

Helen Smith, RN
Beverly Baker, LSW

Oktibbeha #4

Amanda McCrary, RN
Tennie Simpson, LMSW

Webster

Lynette Hunt, RN
Lisa Woods, LSW

Winston

Kim Mills, RN
Lauren Smith, LSW

Anyone interested in this program, or simply needing additional information, should call the GTPDD Medicaid Waiver office at 662-324-7860, select **Option #3**.

“FIRSTS!”

(Notes and thoughts from C2C students, a compilation)

Days 1 thru 15. “Wonder if I will EVER learn this. I know I won’t, I know I won’t. But, I learned that stuff from yesterday. I’ll just hang in and see—don’t have anything else to do except baby-sit and watch TV.

Days 16-28. “Gosh, I am almost finished. Wonder if I will get a job; wonder if I will like it if I do. Wonder if I can do it if I do. Wonder, wonder, wonder, worry, worry, worry.

Day 34. “An interview—I didn’t know what an interview meant a few days ago—I thought it was when the TV guy talked to somebody—but I HAVE AN INTERVIEW about a job! ME! Maybe I won’t have to baby-sit anymore unless I want to.

Day 35. “Do I look okay? No, change these shoes, tuck shirt in, stand up straight and look people in the eye.

Day 35, Later. “I got it, I got it! Mom, Everybody, hey Mom, I got a job. I start tomorrow. Can I wear your brown sweater? Will I sleep tonight? Will I ever sleep again. This is just so so great. I hope I can do it, I hope, I hope.

Day 36. “This door is so heavy. Duh me, it says *pull* not *push*, dummy. Did anybody see me? Will they think I am stupid? Somebody smiled at me. Wonder why. Did I miss a spot shaving? Has my shirt come untucked? Oh, the smiling lady is my supervisor, I remember now. Maybe she smiles at everybody. Now, she is coming over. I hope I say the right thing.

Day 36, Later. “It is still scary, but first day was okay. The other workers are nice and showed me some ways I never thought about to do things—I hope I remember their names.

Day 38. “I know everyone’s name and even some of the customers’ names. A week ago I was finishing my classes and now I am working! Supervisor said I was doing a good job, and she encouraged me to take my breaks. But, there is just so much to do!

Day 50. “Filled out my first timesheet before I left work today. Get first paycheck on Tuesday. Be nice if I had it this weekend, but I know what I am going to buy—Can’t wait!

Day 53. “My name on a check, *my* name on a check.....but this can’t be mine, it isn’t enough. Need to see counselor and find out what happened.

Day 53, Later. “Guess I wasn’t listening too well in class that day. They told me there would be payments coming out of my check but I thought it would be 2 or 3 dollars, NOT \$75.20. Mom told me that would happen too, but I didn’t listen to her very closely. But, it is still “my own money” and I can buy my dream, or save some, or help my little sister, or just whatever I want.

“And, I earned it!”

C2C participants from Choctaw, Oktibbeha, Webster and Winston counties receive 24 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 WIOA program. In exchange, the youth is provided a real work experience with potential for unsubsidized employment.

If you know an out-of-school youth, 18 – 24 years of age who is motivated, determined, and looking for a helping hand toward employment, call: Choctaw and Winston – Teresa at 662-324-7860 ext. 1125, Oktibbeha and Webster – Mitzi at ext. 1128. There’s no better time than NOW!!

THANK YOU, AREA EMPLOYERS, FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Phylis Benson	23 years
Jennifer Bridges	05 years
Janice Davis	09 years
Robert Dill	09 years
Jessie Evans	18 years
Jacqueline Jackson	08 years
Tricia Jones	23 years
Debbie McKee	21 years
Magdalena Morris	21 years
Rosie Spencer	14 years
Helen Smith	06 years

Jacqueline Allen	06 years
Lisa Coleman	07 years
George Crawford	39 years
Lorene Cummins	13 years
Candace Douglas	06 years
Vivian Evans	07 years
Jennifer Gibson	05 years
Jenny Grantham	13 years
Sarah Harkins	06 years
Michelle Harris	14 years
Lynn Herndon	11 years
Mary Love	12 years
Jana Peterson	08 years
Wanda Rush	05 years
Scott Stewart	09 years

Ella Bell	08 years
Ida Eacholes	07 years
Bobby Gann	43 years
Ethel Goss	14 years
Carla Guyton	08 years
Jennifer Odum	10 years
Barbara Ray	18 years
Tekela Taylor	09 years

Staff Anniversaries

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

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**We're on the
Web:
www.gtpdd.com**

TOWN OF SHUQUALAK MAKES SEWER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS ...

The Town of Shuqualak received a 2015 Community Development Block Grant from the Mississippi Development Authority for \$450,000. The improvements, which are being completed, include a camera inspection of approximately 21,000 linear feet of existing sewer mains and the repair and/or replacement of existing sewer mains within the Town of Shuqualak. The current system is also being expanded to take in nine (9) new customers that are currently unserved by public sewer.

Pictured is the subcontractor for Perma Corporation of Columbus, Mississippi, **Suncoast Infrastructure** of Florence, Mississippi as it makes repairs to existing sewer lines and places liners in sewer mains that can be rehabilitated.

