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## *From the Director...*



Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson  
Executive Director

## **There's no place like HOME!**

The Department Of Medicaid has approved the Golden Triangle Planning and Development District to serve 1,400 clients within its seven-county area. These clients are individuals who want to stay at home as long as possible, yet need some assistance with day-to-day living. Clients may receive help with light housekeeping, laundry, cooking, bathing, and running errands.

Presently, the GTPDD sponsors 14 teams consisting of a Licensed Social Worker and a Registered Nurse each. These teams are serving 1,313 elderly/disabled persons and are waiting for referrals to add to their client lists.

I am asking each of you to look around and be aware of loved ones, friends, family, etc. within your community who may need assistance. Think of how precious it is to you to be in your own home. Think of what you would miss if, out of necessity, you were unable to remain in this special place. Think of the losses you would feel if you had to leave your home.

Please help us to serve people within our District and help them be as comfortable at home as long as they can stay there. Referrals may come from any source: home health, Medicaid, individuals, etc.

If you know anyone that you think may qualify, please contact Vicki Clay, Medicaid Waiver Supervisor at 662-320-2001, ext. 1138; 662-251-3223; or [vclay@gtpdd.com](mailto:vclay@gtpdd.com).

### **Staff Anniversaries**

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

#### **APRIL**

Keisha Cunningham	08 Years
Sherri Fowler	07 Years
Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson	22 Years
Janet Macon	10 Years

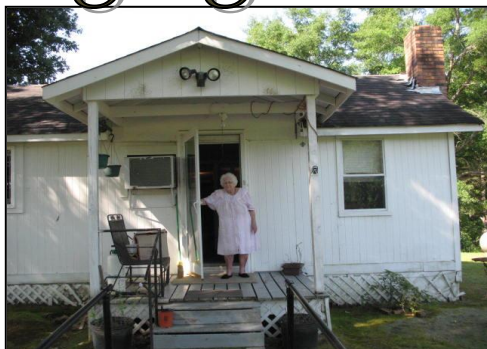
#### **MAY**

Arka Clay	05 Years
Vicki Clay	18 Years
Queenzella Gibson	07 Years
Shirley Jones	05 Years
Earnestine Robinson	11 Years
Toby Sanford	08 Years
Teshia Taylor	05 Years
Lesa Wilson	08 Years

#### **JUNE**

Sherry Bowen	08 Years
La'Ketta Cooper	05 Years
Mary Cox	05 Years
Lena Davis	06 Years
Sharon Duke	06 Years
Phyllis Flake	06 Years
Janice Houston	05 Years
Minnie Lindsey	08 Years
Tina McWhorter	12 Years
Kenny Orr	10 Years
Eyvonne Swanigan	10 Years
Mary W. Thompson	10 Years

## Aging...



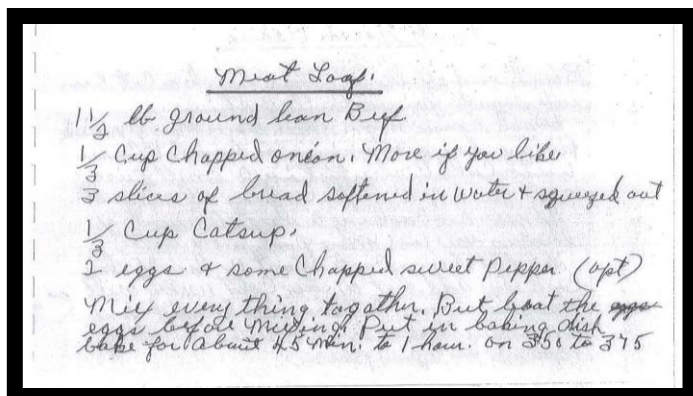
Exemplifying the qualities of graciousness and hospitality, those typically associated with the "true Southern

lady," Ms. Mary Lorene Thrasher welcomed PDD staff into her home. Family pictures and a multitude of keepsakes caught the eye.

Ms. Lorene is a long-time recipient of the Homemaker program and voices her gratitude, "Gennie, my homemaker, comes in each week with a smile. I look forward to her visit. I appreciate everything she does for me." This program gives Ms. Thrasher the independence to remain on the land she and her husband purchased in 1946, and in the home they built. She stated that she is "just not able to do the housework that needs to be done anymore."

She will celebrate her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 11, 2012. She stated, "I know the Lord has left me here for a reason and I only hope I am fulfilling that purpose. I strive to be happy. There are people who gripe and grumble but I want to make people feel happy. Wearing a sour face and a grumbling mind never helps you at all."

Ms. Thrasher said her favorite activities are gardening, cooking and canning. She was asked if she would like to share a recipe for Newsletter readers. With obvious delight, she provided the following:



The purpose of homemaker services is to assist functionally impaired persons, allowing them to remain in their homes, by providing assistance in the performance of tasks necessary for daily living. Homemakers alleviate the chores of housekeeping, laundry, meal planning/preparation, marketing, etc. for the older population in the GTPDD area. (submitted by staff)

For further information, call one of the Homemaker Services Directors at 662-324-4650: Charlotte Caldwell, Ext. 1151; or Phyllis Flake, Ext. 1185.

As we grow older, we must discipline ourselves to continue expanding, broadening, learning, keeping our minds active and open. *Clint Eastwood*

### GIS UPDATE REDISTRICTING

The GIS and Remote Sensing Program is finalizing its decennial census redistricting for the 2010 - 2020 period for all political lines in the counties and cities served by GTPDD. The 6 counties contracting with GTPDD for redistricting services have received pre-clearance from the Department of Justice (DOJ).

#### County:

Choctaw: Supervisor & Justice Court – Passed Muster

Clay: Supervisor – Passed Muster; Justice Court – Under Review

Clay County School Board: In final steps before submitting to DOJ

Noxubee: Supervisor – Passed Muster; Justice Court – no redistricting required

Oktibbeha: Supervisor & Justice Court – Passed Muster

Webster: Supervisor & Justice Court – Passed Muster

Winston: Supervisor & Justice Court – Passed Muster

#### City:

Ackerman: Adopted, in final steps before submitting to DOJ

Eupora: Plan adopted, may require changes due to minority groups displacement with the plan

Louisville: Plan not adopted, still under review by the Board

Macon: Adopted, in final steps before submitting to DOJ

Starkville: Plan not adopted, still under review by the Board

# Loans. . .

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 \$15,797,283.85 to 158 businesses located within its seven-county district. As a result of this funding, 1,790 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. At May 31, 2012, the interest rate for GTPDD loans was as low as 3.75% 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, call Jimmy Cole, Loan Officer at (662) 320-2000 ext. 1133.

## **GOLDEN TRIANGLE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, INC.**

### **LOAN PROGRAM FUNDING BY COUNTY**

**MAY 31, 2012**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>NUMBER OF LOANS</b>	<b>JOBS CREATED</b>	<b>JOBS RETAINED</b>	<b>LOAN AMOUNT</b>
<b>CHOCTAW</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>\$ 2,010,000.00</b>
<b>CLAY</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>996,638.50</b>
<b>LOWNDES</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>5,340,040.00</b>
<b>NOXUBEE</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>1,183,500.00</b>
<b>OKTIBBEHA</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>3,532,313.75</b>
<b>WEBSTER</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>1,099,950.00</b>
<b>WINSTON</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>1,634,841.60</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>1790</b>	<b>1319</b>	<b>\$ 15,797,283.85</b>

## Medicaid Waiver . .

Columbus Fire and Rescue Department and Tombigbee Home Health conducted an in-service for the E&D Medicaid Waiver Case Managers on “Fire and Fall Prevention for Older Adults.”

Attendees were provided checklists with tips and precautions that are pertinent not only to older adults’ safety, but to the safety of all age groups.



Columbus Fire and Rescue presented these cautions from the 2011 National Fire Protection Association (NFPA):

### How to Prevent Fires for Older Adults

NFPA statistics show that people age 65 and older are twice as likely to die in a home fire as the population at large. Older adults can reduce their risk of dying or being injured in a fire by following simple fire prevention rules. The following pointers can help in protecting you and your loved ones.

1. If you smoke, smoke outside. Use deep, sturdy ashtrays. Dampen cigarette butts and ashes before discarding, or bury them in the sand. Never smoke in bed.
  2. Give space heaters space. Keep them at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn – including you. Shut off and unplug heaters when you leave home or go to bed.
  3. Be kitchen wise. Wear tight-fitting clothing or short sleeves when cooking. Use oven mitts to handle hot pans. Never leave cooking unattended. If a pan of food catches fire, slide a lid over it and turn off the burner. Don’t cook if you are drowsy, especially from alcohol or medication.
  4. Stop, drop, and roll. If your clothes catch fire: stop (don’t run), drop gently to the floor/ground, and cover your face with your hands. Roll over and over, or back and forth, to put out the fire. Use cool water for 3 to 5 minutes to cool the burn. Get medical help right away.
  5. Smoke alarms save lives. Have smoke alarms installed outside each sleeping area, on every level of your home, and in each bedroom. Make sure alarms are interconnected: when one sounds, they all sound. Test your smoke alarms once a month by pushing the test buttons.
  6. Plan and practice your escape from fire. If possible, know two ways out of every room in your home and two ways out of the home. Make sure windows and doors open easily. In a fire, get out and stay out. Practice your escape plan at least twice a year.
  7. Know your local emergency number. It may be 911, or the fire department’s phone number. Once you have escaped a fire, call the fire department from a neighbor’s phone or a cell phone.
  8. Plan an escape around your abilities. Have a telephone in your bedroom and post the local emergency number nearby in case you are trapped by smoke or fire.
- (edited). For more information from NFPA, see [www.mfpa.org](http://www.mfpa.org).

**How to Prevent Falls** provided by Tombigbee Home Health, will be published in the next issue of the GTPDD newsletter.

The GTPDD provides services through the Elderly & Disabled Waiver Program. These services enhance the quality of life of the individual and may include: light housekeeping, bathing, errands, laundry, meal planning, food preparation and respite. There are 14 Waiver teams in place at the GTPDD ready to serve and meet the needs of the elderly and disabled. For more information call Vicki Clay, RN Supervisor at (662) 320-2001, Ext. 1138.



## *Planning...*

### **HOUSING DEPARTMENT**

Construction funded by Clay County 2011 Homeowner Rehabilitation/Reconstruction grant remains in progress, and the environmental process is complete. Project administrator and a County official attended an implementation workshop on June 21, 2012.

The City of Macon and the Town of Crawford were funded under the 2010 HOME program for reconstruction of substandard housing units. Construction contracts have been awarded and the State has issued a Notice to Proceed for each. Construction work has begun on these houses.

The final house in the Winston County 2009 HOME project is in final stages of completion. This project should be closed out by or before July 1.

The date for submission on 2012 HOME grants has not been announced. Once this announcement is made by the Mississippi Development Authority, notification will be made to local units of government and district personnel will begin work on these applications.

### **Winston County Receives Rural Impact Grant**

The Winston County Board of Supervisors received a Rural Impact Fund Grant (RIF), in the amount of \$50,000, to assist with roof repairs to a county-owned industrial building leased to and operated by Teters Floral Products, Inc. The 590,000 square-foot building is used for processing and distributing various floral products. The roof is in need of upgrading to prevent leaks and damage to inventory and machinery used in the manufacturing and distribution process. Winston County has agreed to match the project with \$90,000 and Teters Floral Products, Inc. has committed \$25,000 for a total project cost of \$165,000. In addition to the cash match for the project, Teters has committed ten (10) new jobs as a result of the grant funding.

### **Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program**



The Mississippi Development Authority's (MDA) \$9.6 million allocation was competitively awarded in sub-grants to smaller cities and counties

throughout the State of Mississippi that were not eligible for direct formula grants. These projects reduced the total energy use and fossil fuel emissions, and improved energy efficiency in public buildings.

The Mississippi Development Authority awarded EECBG Program funds to several municipalities and counties in the Golden Triangle Planning and Development District. Most of these projects have been completed or will be finished by the end of June 2012. Funding was used for various energy saving improvements including retrofitting of lighting with energy saving units, replacing outdated HVAC units with energy star-ratings, and replacement of older appliances with energy star-rated units. The goal of the program was using products manufactured in the USA. Grantees in the GTPDD included: Choctaw, Clay, Noxubee, Oktibbeha and Webster Counties along with the municipalities of Artesia, Crawford, Macon, Noxapater, and Shuqualak.



Pictured, Mayor Bob Boykin of the City of Macon and Project Engineer John Cunningham of Neel-Schaffer look over the improvements at a final inspection for the work completed on the Macon City Hall and Courtroom. The City Hall and Courtroom received new heating, cooling and improved lighting.

## Oktibbeha County and Starkville are featured in MPB TV Special *Taking Charge*

Oktibbeha County and the City of Starkville are two local units of government featured in a recently aired Mississippi Public Broadcasting (MPB) television special. The program features the ways resourceful Mississippi communities are taking steps to reduce their energy usage and lower costs by installing energy-efficient upgrades.

*Taking Charge* aired on June 14. The program highlighted HVAC and control systems improvements and lighting upgrades made to six (6) Oktibbeha County buildings, including the justice center and courthouse, along with the City of Starkville's efforts to replace many of its existing traffic signals with LED lights that are brighter and last longer.

With an eye towards saving both energy and money, more than 80 Mississippi cities and counties took advantage of energy audit assistance and grant funds made available through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program (EECBG). This one-time EECBG program was funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The Mississippi Development Authority's Energy and Natural Resources Division awarded EECBG funding to governmental entities that demonstrated plans to make energy improvements to their buildings and/or community infrastructure.

*Taking Charge* spotlights six local units of government and the projects they undertook, with EECBG assistance, to reduce energy consumption, resulting in huge savings to taxpayers. The 30-minute MPB program also reported the success of projects in McComb, Philadelphia, Sumrall and Lincoln County.

## FY2012 CDBG Public Facilities Applications Submitted

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) has received, from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), an allocation of \$23,838,889 for the FY2012 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. This CDBG program provides funding for public infrastructure improvements with water and sewer needs having the greatest priority. The minimum threshold requirements are that at least 51% of the project beneficiaries are of low and moderate income and applicants must have no open Public Facility (Regular or Small Government), Emergency/Urgent Needs or Self Help grants. Recently GTPDD staff prepared and submitted four (4) Public Facilities applications that are currently under review. MDA received 37 applications in the Regular Public Facilities competition requesting \$14,442,624 from an allocation of \$5,000,000. A total of 61 applications was submitted in the Small Government category, requesting \$22,234,605 from an allocation of \$7,038,889.

### CDBG PUBLIC FACILITIES APPLICATIONS

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Funds Requested</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>
Town of Artesia	Water & Sewer Improvements	\$450,000	
Town of Noxapater	Sewer Improvements	\$450,000	\$330,000-ARC
City of West Point	Drainage Improvements	\$300,000	\$150,000-local
Lowndes County	Water Improvements	\$119,862	\$119,863-local

## ***WIA*** ***(Workforce Investment Act)*** . . .

### **WIA 2012 FUNDING RENEWAL**

SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM = RENEWED FUNDING! Golden Triangle PDD has been awarded 2012 funding to continue administering the WIA Counseling to Career program. A year ago this month, GTPDD implemented this new youth program in Choctaw, Oktibbeha, Webster and Winston counties.

At that time program goals were set:

- Enroll 83 out-of-school youth under 22 years of age
- Teach them Smart Work Ethics
- Provide individual counseling
- Assign work experiences to practice skills learned in the classroom
- Guide them into the next phase of their lives:
  - Further education
  - Employment, or
  - Military service

It is obvious that goals have been met! More significantly, lives have been changed.

And, here's the proof that the C2C program has changed lives:

County	Total # Served	# Completed Training	# Placed on WIA Funded Jobs Or Found Personal Employment After Training
Choctaw	20	19 (95%)	19 (18 – WIA, 1 – personal job)
Oktibbeha	34	32 (94%)	32 (31 – WIA, 1 – personal job)
Webster	9	9 (100%)	9 (7 – WIA, 2 – personal job)
Winston	21	19 (90%)	17 (2 declined job placement due to personal situations)
Total	84	79 (94%)	77 (97%)

Encouraged by their WIA funded jobs, several youth found employment on their own initiative, while some decided to continue the education needed to obtain their “dream” jobs. For those still needing assistance, the GTPDD staff continues to work with them through counseling, job search assistance and educational guidance.

If you know a youth in your community who is under the age of 22, out-of-school, and desiring workforce training, please suggest that they contact the WIA staff at 662-324-7860, extension 1128 to receive an application. Classes will be starting soon.

Your help is needed to spread the word!

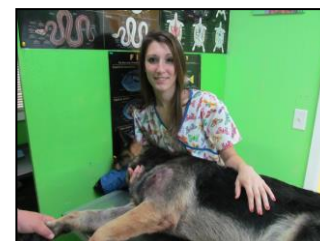
Winston youth,  
Rebekkah Hodge,  
working the front  
desk at  
Lake Tiak O'Khata.



Webster C2C  
participant,  
Daniel Ray, at  
work at  
Evergreen Ag in  
Mathiston.



Choctaw youth, Anna  
McGee, restraining  
animal for surgery at  
Choctaw Animal  
Clinic.



Oktibbeha youth, Brittany Rogers, receiving \$100 incentive check for completion of her GED.



## SENIOR FARMERS MARKET

The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program is a cooperative effort of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce and the Golden Triangle Area Agency on Aging. The project is two-fold: 1) increase the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by senior citizens and 2) increase the use and awareness of farmers' markets.

Seniors 60 years of age and older, with certain income qualifications, are eligible to receive a one-time benefit in the form of a \$25 voucher from the Golden Triangle Area Agency on Aging. This voucher can be used at **authorized** local farmers' markets to buy fresh fruits and vegetables grown by local farmers.

When buying local produce, you are supporting the local economy and your local farmer.

Vouchers are available at the Golden Triangle Area Agency on Aging. Vouchers can be redeemed through November, 2012.

For more information please call Bobby Gann at 662-320-2000, extension 1104.

*Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc.*

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