

In This Issue

FROM THE DIRECTOR

AGING

- *B2I*

GIS

LOANS

MEDICAID WAIVER

PLANNING

- *Eupora Sewage Lagoon*
- *CDBG Public Facility Applications*
- *Grant Awarded to City of West Point*

GTPDD Anniversaries

WIA

From the Director..



Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson
Executive Director

Featuring news from the Columbus Senior Enrichment Center.....

This is the Season of giving, sharing, helping, reflecting, paying it forward, etc. This is a sweet story that is very relevant to the season we are in and very relevant to the spirit of the Senior Enrichment Center.

The individuals who pass through the doors of the Senior Center come from all walks and stations in life, but, for the most part, there is a common thread among. They value life, each other, and have an inherent desire to help others. For some, this help may be a phone call, a note card, or even a visit. For others, it may be with food, a helping hand, or with prayer.

The onset of each New Year brings with it talk of goals for the year and, unlike everybody else (with individual improvement plans), that conversation took place among groups at the Senior Center. What could the groups do to pool their talents for a project that would benefit someone else? The seed was planted! Amazingly, a member of the Jewelry Making class was contacted by a friend wanting to know if she knew of anyone who could use a couple of boxes of yarn. Of course, she jumped all over that opportunity and within two or three weeks, the nicest, sweetest couple came to the center and unloaded a car FULL of yarn, yarn supplies, needles, and hooks for the Knitting and Crochet classes! The Center looked like a yarn shop!

This was fantastic on so many levels!!! These materials could be used in teaching, saving instructors out-of-pocket upfront expenses. They

In Memoria

Mary Ann Wood
November 8, 2014

GTPDD Board Member
1997-2014

could be provided to participants with limited funds to buy their own supplies. The variety of yarns inspired ideas of a variety of projects.

The couple who donated the yarn did so, on behalf of the man's mother, who had recently moved into a skilled care facility. The couple had one request, which was for the class to complete two projects the elderly woman had begun...a baby blanket and an afghan. To date, the baby blanket has been completed and someone is finishing the afghan, which will be returned by the class to the couple. That, however, is not the end of this story.

Class members took some of this yarn home and, each week when they returned to class, they brought in their pretty little squares. Other members took these squares and worked their magic arranging the squares into a design; then others would stitch the squares together to make larger squares. By Christmas these ladies had quite a collection of lap throws completed. They called the couple who had donated the yarn in the first place, and told them what they had done and wanted to know where they would like the lap throws donated. Sadly, the elderly mother had passed away, but the couple requested that the throws be given to the facility where the elderly woman had stayed. They wanted them to be given to those who are not fortunate to have family and friends that are able to visit often, so that they would know that others were thinking of them and cared about them.

Who would have dreamed that one simple New Year's idea came to be reality, and that one gift profoundly touched the lives of all who laid hands on something so simple as a strand of yarn, and how that yarn wove its way into their hearts, knitting them all together in love!

Sounds like a Christmas story to me.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Aging . . .

B2I

Bridge to Independence (B2I) is a statewide program designed to assist individuals who reside in nursing homes and intermediate care facilities to transition back into their community. The goal of B2I is to allow flexible financing for state Medicaid programs with the objective that participants may choose to live in the most appropriate and preferred setting. The program is designed for older adults (65+) and persons with physical, mental, developmental, and intellectual disabilities. Individuals may qualify if they are Medicaid eligible and have lived in an intermediate care facility or nursing home for at least 90 days. Personalized transition services for B2I clients include extended pharmacy benefits, caregiver and peer supports, life skills training, safety planning, home and utility deposits, and other specialized services. These transition services are available to qualified individuals for 365 days after the date of discharge from a facility.

Golden Triangle Planning and Development District's Bridge to Independence program has successfully transitioned several participants out of nursing homes and intermediate care facilities. Those participants who have completed their 365 days of the program are now living independently in the community. The GTPDD Community Navigator works with each B2I client and a transition team to ensure that the client's needs are being met. If you have any questions or know someone who may qualify for Bridge to Independence services through Golden Triangle Planning and Development District, please contact the Area Agency on Aging Director Bobby Gann or the Community Navigator Amanda Carden at 662-324-4650, ext. 1114.

GIS...

The ability to know where every structure in the county is located has already made a difference in the lives of the residents of Winston County and has greatly enhanced the ability of the political officials to help the residents they represent. On April 28, 2014 a tornado struck Winston County causing much destruction and the devastating loss of ten (10) lives. The ARC grant received by the City of Louisville and Winston County facilitated a damage assessment of all structures and property. This information was available for viewing by the elected officials, MEMA and FEMA at a speed never before seen in Mississippi. After the storm, the Golden Triangle Planning and Development District (GTPDD) GIS staff was on-the-ground using information collected as a result of the ARC grant. Employees were able to account for all missing structures, the parcel on which they sat, the owners, the address and all information needed to get residents affected into temporary housing in less than 28 days.

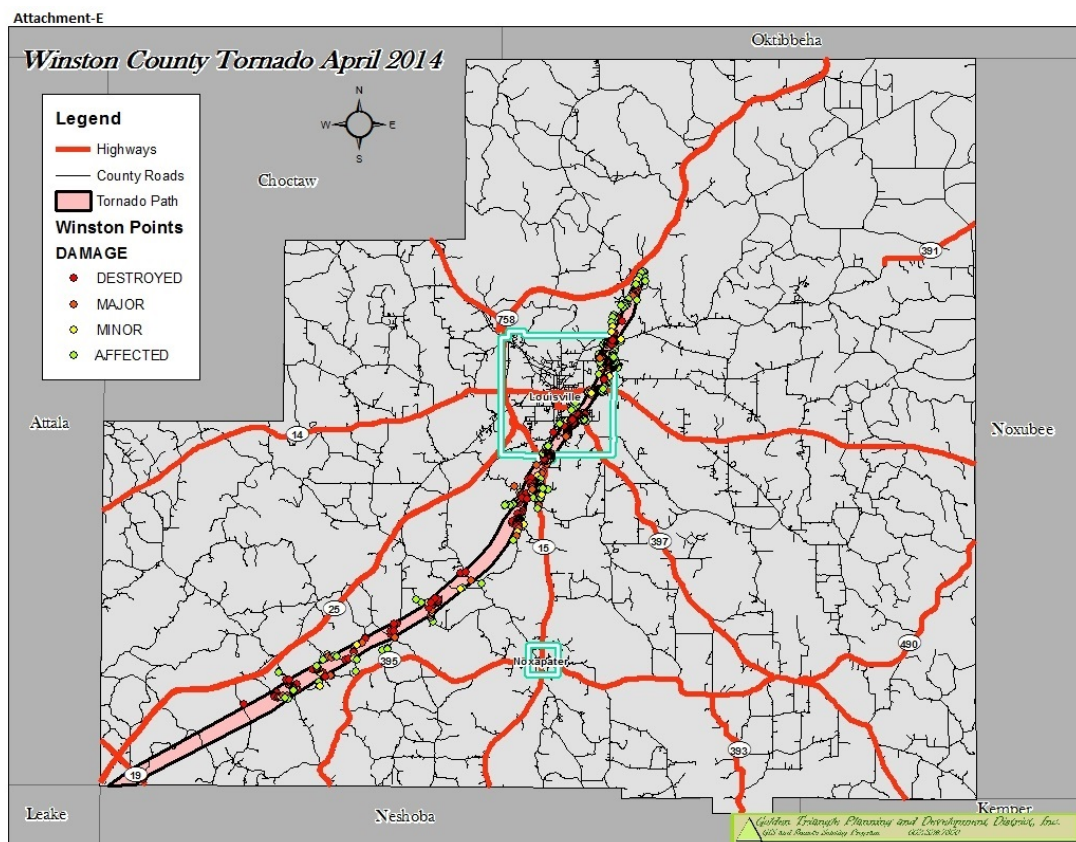
GTPDD staff was able to provide FEMA and MEMA geographic coordinates of all structures that were damaged with “before” and “after” pictures. Along with the photographs, MEMA was provided a list of every structure with tax parcel, damage estimates and a damage category already set up by MEMA. The four (4) categories used by MEMA were: Destroyed, Major, Minor and Affected.

As each structure was evaluated, the percentage of destruction could be added to the data. Damage assessment of cost, tax revenue lost and future county budgets were calculated within 48 hours after the storm had passed through the region. Map data generated by the PDD was used by the city and county to determine the best location for a debris disposal site. Maps of need assessment were easily created by utilizing previously collected data. From the State of Mississippi down, no one had ever seen anything like the location data that Winston County used for damage assessment and re-building.

Table of Destruction
Count:

CATEGORY	COUNT
Destroyed	295
Major	168
Minor	81
Affected	102

TOTAL	646
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Loans. . .

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY FOR SALE 123 EAST PLYMOUTH ROAD COLUMBUS, MISSISSIPPI

The property is located on the north side of East Plymouth Road. The property has approximately 210 feet of frontage on East Plymouth Road. The rectangular site has an indicated depth of 325 feet, with frontage on the west side on Walnut Street and on the north side on Magnolia Street. The property has an estimated area of approximately 1.57 acres.



The main structure is a steel-frame, corrugated metal building which rests on a concrete slab foundation. This building includes a total of approximately 6,655 square feet. The interior of this building is open work or warehouse type space with two small office areas. The office areas include approximately 792 square feet or approximately 12% of the total building area.

A second building is located just north, or to the rear, of the main building. This building is a corrugated metal structure on a concrete slab foundation. It measures approximately 40' X 60', or 2,400 square feet. This building has an eve height of 14 feet.



Other improvements include perimeter fencing, metal canopies at the rear of the main building, a large pole shed, and a combination of concrete and gravel paving.

For more information, please call Andy Brown at (662) 328-2345 or Jimmy Cole at (662) 320-2000, Extension 1133.

Medicaid Waiver...

Christmas is an especially joyous time of the year for the Case Managers! The GTPDD allows Case Managers the opportunity to provide gifts to clients on the Medicaid Waiver Program. Food, warm clothes, blankets, toiletries, and useful household items are just a few of the items purchased and then boxed for delivery to the clients.

Many clients served do not have family or friends who can share in the joy of giving at Christmas. Miss Mattie Dinwiddie, pictured here with one of her case managers, Lindsey Marsh, does not have family. Miss Mattie is 93 years old and her personal goals are to live to be 100, continue to lean on God, and to go to heaven! She states "I am blessed to have a cousin that checks on me regularly, as well as church members that pick me up for church services."



According to Michelle Harris, Miss Dinwiddie's former Case Manager, "Miss Mattie has a sweet spirit, a kind heart, and a deep spiritual faith."

The general consensus among the Case Manager Christmas elves is "Words hardly describe the rewarding feelings of joy we experience looking into the faces of the clients when we deliver their gifts. Seeing the eyes sparkle, the tears of joy, words of appreciation – that is what Christmas is all about. We feel blessed to know that we have made a difference in the lives of these seniors. WE are the ones who receive a gift, from them!"

The Medicaid Waiver Program continues to serve over 1,400 clients in the Golden Triangle area. This program includes: personal care services, in-home respite services, adult day care, expanded home health visits, and home-delivered meals. All costs for services are reimbursable to an approved provider and all services must be approved by the Division of Medicaid. If you know of anyone who may need this service, please contact us at 662-324-7860, option 3.

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
Stephanie Cannon, LSW

Lowndes #1

Libby Wansley, RN
Janice Miller, LSW

Lowndes #2

Cindy Reese, RN
Lesa Wilson, LSW

Lowndes #3

Lindsey Marsh, RN
Angelia Sansing, LSW

Lowndes #4

Christy Massey, RN
Emilie Hamilton, LSW

Noxubee #1

Jana Peterson, RN
Jessica Henry, 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

Charlotte Dowd, RN
Suzy Winstead, LSW

Webster

Lynette Hunt, RN
Lesa Wilson

Winston

Kim Mills, RN
Lauren Smith, LSW

Planning...

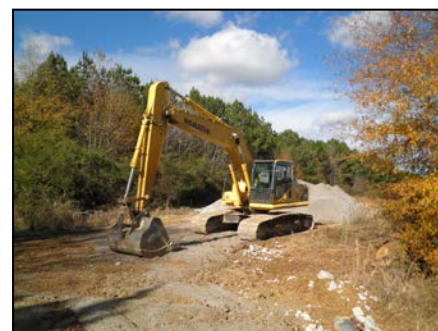
EUPORA STABILIZING CITY SEWAGE LAGOON SYSTEM



The *City of Eupora* received a *COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT* through the Mississippi Development Authority in the amount of \$450,000 to stabilize the banks of the city sewage lagoon system. Anderson Contracting, LLC received the contract for completing the project, which consists of placing rip-rap along



the banks of the lagoons and stabilizing the top levels with a slag material. The pictures above show the completed work on one of the lagoon cells. With work on the second lagoon already in progress, the project is moving toward early completion.



Mississippi Development Authority Approves CDBG Public Facility Applications

Governor Phil Bryant recently announced that the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) has approved FY2014 Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Facilities projects. Applications prepared by Golden Triangle Planning and Development District staff, which received funding, are:

	CDBG	ARC	Other	TOTAL
City of Macon Sewer Improvements	\$450,000	\$ -----	\$ -----	\$ 450,000
Clay County Water Well – Siloam Water Assoc.	\$426,700	\$75,000	\$92,771	\$ 594,471
TOTAL	\$876,700	\$75,000	\$92,771	\$1,044,471

MDA received 45 applications in the Regular Public Facilities competition requesting \$17,819,116 from an allocation of \$4,750,000. In the Small Government category, 77 applications were received, requesting \$29,531,686 from an allocation of \$6,956,071. It is not too early to begin planning for 2015 ARC and CDBG Public Facilities applications. Please contact Phylis Benson, George Crawford or Spencer Brooks at (662) 324-7860.

Planning cont'...

City of West Point Awarded Mississippi Department of Archives and History Grant

The City of West Point has received an \$81,597 Community Heritage Preservation Grant (CHPG) from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) for exterior renovation of City Hall.

The Board of Trustees of MDAH awarded more than \$2 million on behalf of the CHPG program to seventeen preservation and restoration projects across the state. This program, authorized and funded through Mississippi Legislature, helps preserve and restore courthouses, schools and other historic properties in Certified Local Government communities. Grant awards are paid on a reimbursable basis and require a twenty percent local match.

The intent of the proposed project is stabilization and preservation of the West Point City Hall which was designated as a Historic Landmark in 1985. The building, constructed in 1909, has served the citizens of this community for over 100 years. Time and exposure to the elements have taken a toll and created the need to address the deteriorating exterior conditions of this historical building. The clock tower, which has become an identifiable feature for the City, is also in need of immediate attention. The staff of Golden Triangle Planning and Development District will continue to work with the City's elected leaders throughout the implementation of this unique restoration project.



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

OCTOBER

Dave Alexander	06 years
Melody Benseid	16 years
Cindy Brown	05 years
Nora Carroll	16 years
Linda Crumble	05 years
Lisa Doane	05 years
Lula Eiland	16 years
Martie Gibson	15 years
Willer Glenn	09 years
Janie Harris	16 years
Betty Hunt	16 years
Aldean Ivy	16 years
Charlene Jones	09 years
Hardie Jordan	16 years
Joyce Lampkin	16 years
Joanne Peterson	21 years
Annie Sanders	16 years
Lauren Smith	14 years

NOVEMBER

Beverly Baker	11 years
Alicia Barry	13 years
Mary Byron	13 years
Glenda Fason	07 years
Shirley Forrester	05 years
Jessica Foxx	14 years
Earline Gandy	13 years
Candace Jobe	13 years
Beatrice Logan	13 years
Michelle Milner	10 years
Elberta Phillips	22 years

DECEMBER

Jackie Byas	07 years
Hazel Cunningham	06 years
Rachel Embry	06 years
Tonga Gillespie	13 years
Patsy Patterson	09 years

WIA (Workforce Investment Act) . . .

**YOU ARE THE VOICE.....
HELP SPREAD THE WORD!**

WIA Youth Program News:

The GTPDD Workforce Investment Act Program, Counseling to Career (C2C), is up and running in Choctaw, Oktibbeha, Webster and Winston counties! Beginning July 1, the WIA staff began the recruitment process for out-of-school youth, 21 years of age or younger, interested in developing workforce skills and practicing those skills at a local worksite where they would be paid through WIA funds. The C2C goal is that participants, upon completion of the program with the help of a C2C Counselor, will find full time employment or continue their education.

WIA staff report the participation of 48 youth at the end of December, 42 of whom have completed the required 21 hours of Work Ethics Training. These completers have been assigned to work sites; 6 non-completers have secured jobs on their own, using the skills taught in training.

Monies are available for 36 more motivated, energetic, dedicated-to-succeed youth to participate in this innovative program. Remember, they must be: 21 years of age or younger, not attending school and residing in Choctaw, Oktibbeha, Webster or Winston counties. (Clay, Lowndes and Noxubee youth may be served through EMCC.)

Business Recruitment News:

Approximately 50 businesses in Choctaw, Oktibbeha, Webster, and Winston counties partner with the WIA program to serve as worksites for C2C participants. The Golden Triangle WIA staff is continually looking for new businesses interested in supervising and mentoring youth during this work training process. There is no cost to the partnering business, as all salaries and workers comp insurance are paid through WIA funds.

If you know a **youth** residing in one of these counties who needs job skills training, work experience, or assistance to continue education, or if you know a **business** that is interested in supporting and mentoring local youth, tell them about the C2C program. They may call:

Choctaw & Winston - Teresa Shumaker 662-324-7860 ext. 1125,

Oktibbeha & Webster – Donna Green 662-324-7860 ext. 1115, or

WIA Programs Director - Mitzi Lawrence 662-324-7860 ext. 1128.

YOU ARE THE VOICE OF YOUR COMMUNITY!

Please spread the word to Youth and Businesses about C2C Participation.



Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc.

*Post Office Box 828
Starkville, MS 39760*