



# Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc.

Beginning 2017, the GTPDD newsletter will ONLY be available in electronic form. Please visit our website at [www.GTPDD.com](http://www.GTPDD.com) for each quarter's update!!

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## From the Director. . . . .

The Golden Triangle Planning & Development District Area Agency on Aging and Starkville Salvation Army coordinated services to provide hot home delivered meals to 120 elderly residents in Choctaw, Oktibbeha, Webster and Winston counties for Thanksgiving. Salvation Army arranged to get the meals donated and helped deliver them in Oktibbeha County. GTPDD employees, as well as some "helpers", assisted with delivering the meals. I encourage PDD staff to utilize their children and grandchildren with any community service projects. I believe in showing our young people the needs within our communities, which will help build greater leaders for our future. It is my prayer that you and your families have a Merry Christmas and a Blessed Year in 2017!



Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson  
Executive Director



Pictured above is meal recipient Annie Frazier along with Barrett & Preston Lewis, Grandsons of GTPDD Executive Director.

# Merry Christmas!!!

Christmas is a joyous time of the year for Case Managers! From the beginning of the Medicaid Waiver program, Golden Triangle Planning and Development District, Inc. has provided gifts for clients at Christmas.

Many clients do not have family or friends with whom to share Christmas. First, Case Managers select food items, warm clothes, blankets, and other household goods. Then, they box the items for delivery to clients.

Among the Case Managers, the consensus of opinion is that words cannot describe the feelings of joy they experience when giving the clients gifts. Christmas is about spreading joy, hope, and kindness. The Case Managers feel blessed to know that they have made a difference in the lives of these seniors.

The Medicaid Waiver Program continues to serve over 1,400 clients in the Golden Triangle area. Area services include: personal care services, in-home respite services, and home-delivered meals. Case Managers make monthly visits to clients' homes to determine if the clients are receiving all the services for which they are eligible. If you know of anyone who may need this service, please contact us at 662-324-7860, option 3.



## Choctaw

Tina Gill, RN  
Rachel Embry, LSW

## Lowndes #2

Cindy Reese, RN  
Tonia Davis, LSW

## Noxubee #1

Jana Peterson, RN  
Jessica Spears, LSW

## Oktibbeha #2

Stacy Elkins, RN  
Jennifer Grantham, LSW

## Webster

Lynette Hunt, RN  
Lisa Woods, LSW

## Clay

Mitzi Phelps, RN  
Lesla Wilson, LSW

## Lowndes #3

Lindsey Marsh, RN  
Angelia Sansing, LSW

## Noxubee #2

Tammy Castle, RN  
Jennifer Bridges, LSW

## Oktibbeha #3

Helen Smith, RN  
Beverly Baker, LSW

## Winston

Kim Mills, RN  
Lauren Smith, LSW

## Lowndes #1

Brandy Clark, RN  
Audie Strain, LSW

## Lowndes #4

Blair Gerrish, RN  
Lynn Herndon, LSW

## Oktibbeha #1

Tina McWhorter, RN  
Suzy Winstead, LSW

## Oktibbeha #4

Amanda McCrary, RN  
Tennie Simpson, LSW

## A Trip Down Memory Lane

It was a great place to grow up – the Piney Woods of South Mississippi, notably Smith County. We lived in Marathon Camp which was the center of logging operations for the Marathon Lumber Company in Laurel, Mississippi. My father was superintendent of the logging operation for that company. The name of the Post Office there was Zula and it is no longer there.

I was born in Laurel, Mississippi in 1917. At the time, World War I was in progress and my father worked for either Wassau Southern or Gilchrist-Fordney Lumber Company. My mother was a registered nurse. My father wanted to serve in the armed forces, but was told he was needed more at home in the lumber industry. This really went “against his grain” as he really wanted to fight for his country.

Sometime after I was born, my father began to work for Marathon and we moved from Laurel to the Camp. I was too young to remember much about the first camp, but I do remember the day we moved to the new Smith County Campsite.

Our house was built on railroad flat cars (perhaps the forerunner of mobile homes) and the company built a “dummy” tract right to our house so that the train backed up, hooked onto our house, and we “moved.” We didn’t have to pack anything – we just stayed right there in our house. Once my mother had a big bowl of milk in the ice box and the motion of the train on the tracks kept sloshing the milk onto the floor and my mother had to keep mopping it up. She was not very happy about that.

My first playhouse was under the front-end of our house. It was left open so it could be easily attached to the engine when it was time to move. That end of the house was high enough off the ground that I could stand under it – an ideal place to play.

My earliest playmates, besides my two brothers, Edward and Herman, were Idella Kelly and her brother, Herbert, and LaVerne Davidge. Idella’s dad was the bookkeeper at the camp and LaVerne’s dad was skidder foreman. Idella and LaVerne were cousins. LaVerne had two younger sisters, Cecil and Dulcie. Then before we left the camp, her parents had a son, Bill, and a daughter named Pat.

The camp doctor was Dr. Carter whose family lived elsewhere; and he went home on weekends. After a time Dr. Plummer moved his family to the camp and there were two more playmates, Jimmy and Lillian. Lillian was younger and did not like playing outside. Dr. Plummer loved movies and I got to go with his family to Laurel or Jackson to see movies I would never have seen. With them I saw my first talking movie – Al Jolson – he sang “Sammy Boy.” At Marathon there was a commissary that sold just about everything we needed at the time. There was a community hall where movies were shown every Saturday night and where church services were held on Sundays - Baptist once a month and Methodist once a month. Everyone went to all the services. About once a month the YMCA in Laurel would send out people to put on entertainment for us. There was a post office, ice house, and barber shop. A dentist came to the camp several times a month.

There was a schoolhouse with two rooms and about forty students. Our teachers were Mr. and Mrs. Bassett and they had a daughter, Beatrice. Children from the surrounding area also attended the school which went to tenth grade. Some of the children walked to school, some rode horses, and some came in a wagon.

It seemed like everything we needed to make our lives good was there at the camp. The site of the camp is now part of Roosevelt State Park, near Morton, Mississippi, a beautiful place built during the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps to pay tribute to reforestation of the piney woods after clear-cutting by lumber companies.

### TOP 10 New Year's Resolutions:

1. Stay Fit & Healthy
2. Lose Weight
3. Enjoy Life to the Fullest
4. Spend Less, Save More
5. Spend More Time w/Family & Friends
6. Get Organized
7. Will Not Make Any Resolutions
8. Learn Something New
9. Travel More
10. Read More



The Mississippi Home Corporation (MHC) recently announced the awarding of Phase II Homeowner Reconstruction/Rehabilitation grants for the State of Mississippi. Phase I applications were submitted in August, 2016, and MHC received **110 applications**, of which **only eight (8)** projects could be funded statewide. The City of Eupora and the City of Louisville were each awarded grants in the amount of \$500,000. Congratulations to these municipalities for their efforts to provide better housing for low-to-moderate income citizens in the community. There will be a Phase II Implementation Workshop announced in the near future to inform the municipalities and GTPDD staff of the program qualifications and process to select homeowners for the project.

### PRESCRIPTION DRUG, MEDICARE PART D OPEN ENROLLMENT 2016

*Medicare Prescription Drug* enrollment ended on December 7, 2016. During this 53-day period, the SHIP (State Health Insurance Program) served 1994 clients in (1) assisting with drug plan costs/benefits comparison for 2017, and (2) enrollment into Part D drug benefits.

Although 2016 Open Enrollment is over, many individuals still qualify to enroll in Medicare Part D during the year. These include:

- Those who are aging into Medicare eligibility;
- Anyone losing employer sponsored insurance coverage; and
- Those qualifying for any type of financial assistance, such as Medicaid or Social Security Extra Help.

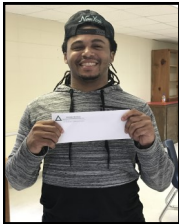
Additionally, those who are moving in or out of a long term or rehab facility also qualify to (1) make changes in Part D benefits, or (2) enroll in coverage for the first time.

## *Local Communities Receive \$85,000+ in Youth Salaries*



Salaries Paid to WIOA Out-of-School Youth \$59,659  
Salaries Paid to Urban Youth Summer Workers \$26,260

Expression on Youth Faces When They Receive First Checks—**PRICELESS!**



During the past twelve months, seventy-one (71) out-of-school youth, ages 16 – 24, in Choctaw, Oktibbeha, Webster, and Winston counties, plus twenty (20) Oktibbeha county in-school-youth, completed work program requirements and were assigned job placements in their respective communities. The out-of-school youth were paid through Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act funds while the in-school-youth were paid through a Mississippi Department of Transportation Grant.

Youth were matched to job positions according to the skills and abilities needed to meet the employers' expectations. In return, the employers were asked to serve as a mentors\* to the youth, providing support, encouragement, and supervision to assure successful work experiences. This was a win-win situation: an employer received a free worker and the youth was provided an actual job experience with not only a salary, but a work reference for resumes.

What an economy boost this was for rural areas! Think about it. What happened to this 85,000+ dollars? These youth spent it in their local areas on things they needed or wanted. Sure, some of it was saved to pay for a car, educational expenses, or future necessities, but the majority of it flowed directly back into the local economy. So, maybe this was actually a win-win-win situation.

Win #1: The youth gained work ethics and training followed by a paid work experience.

Win #2: The employer gained a free worker to mentor and encourage.

Win #3: The economy profited from monies earned.

### **What an amazing opportunity for all involved!**

\*Mentoring: The most successful youth are those fortunate to have had a caring supervisor or coworker on his or her first job. The youth can only learn so much through work ethics training in the classroom. On-the-job experience gives them a chance to apply what they have been taught to a real life situation. A trusted individual, who is willing to assist and counsel the student in the do's and don'ts of what is appropriate in the workplace, can be a positive influence on the worker, improving the youth's self-esteem and setting the stage for good future work habits.

How about it? Would you like to, or do you know someone else who might like to, contribute to the successful development of today's workforce? If so, call Mitzi Lawrence @ 662-324-7860 ext. 1128.

## Officials Break Ground on \$42 Million COMMUNIVERSITY Project

Local, state and federal agencies recently gathered to break ground on the Golden Triangle's newest workforce development project, The COMMUNIVERSITY. This 145,683 square foot building will be East Mississippi Community College's state-of-the-art workforce technical training facility at its Golden Triangle campus near the entrance of the Golden Triangle Global Industrial Aerospace Park. The Communi-versity will deliver the training and educa-tion necessary to support the advanced manufacturing, automotive and aerospace industries. In addition, this landmark facil-ity will serve as a regional outreach tool that will offer students learning experiences in seeing, touching, and hearing the tech-nology and products manufactured locally. The first floor will feature

- industry-oriented laboratory space

- high-bay training and education spaces designed for program-to-program collaborative learning
- equipment and machinery required to demonstrate an actual production area
- a museum-like interactive manufactur-ing inspiration center and administra-tion and support spaces.

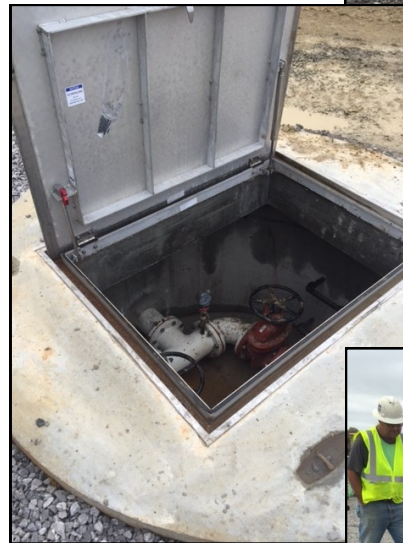
The second floor will provide

- technology-appropriate classrooms
- learning laboratories and meeting space.

Funding for the project is sourced from state bonds (\$18M), the Appalachian Re-gional Commission (\$10.7M), local com-munity funds from Clay, Lowndes and Oktibbeha Counties (\$13.5M) and EMCC (\$400K).

## SDI “PAINT SHOP” Addition Nearing Completion

The Appalachian Regional Commission and the State of Mississippi participated in the funding of water and sewer improvements to the new “Paint Shop” addition to the Steel Dynamic, Inc. campus in the Golden Triangle Industrial Park in Lowndes County. A final inspection of the project was held on December 6, 2016. Pictured during the inspection at the project site are Daniel Rayfield of the Prairie Land Water Association, Brenda Lathan of the Lowndes County Industrial Development Authority and George Crawford of the Golden Triangle Planning and Development District. Calvert-Spradling Engineers of West Point, Mississippi was the project engineer and the Golden Triangle Planning and Development District, Inc. was the grants administrator.



# Christmas

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We're on the  
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## OCTOBER

Donna Abbott	05 years
Dave Alexander	08 years
Melody Bensend	18 years
Cindy Brown	07 years
Nora Carroll	18 years
Lula Eiland	18 years
Stacy Elkins	05 years
Martie Gibson	17 years
Willer Glenn	11 years
Minnie Hodge	06 years
Betty Hunt	18 years
Aldean Ivy	18 years
Charlene Jones	11 years
Hardie Jordan	18 years
Joanne Peterson	23 years
Diana Prince	05 years
Annie Sanders	18 years
Sharon Seals	06 years
Lauren Smith	16 years

## NOVEMBER

Beverly Baker	13 years
Alicia Barry	15 years
Mary Byron	15 years
Glenda Fason	09 years
Shirley Forrester	07 years
Jessica Foxx	16 years
Beatrice Logan	15 years
Michelle Milner	12 years
Elberta Phillips	24 years

## DECEMBER

Jackie Byas	09 years
Hazel Cunningham	08 years
Isadora Davis	05 years
Rachel Embry	08 years
Tonga Gillespie	15 years
Fannie Mays	05 years
Maria McNutt	13 years

### Staff Anniversaries

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