



November  
2015

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE JEFFERSON COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

## Housing the Homeless

*Shelter Plus Care Program Stretches Dollar to Provide Second Chance for Hundreds*

Shelter Plus Care is more than just the name of a Jefferson County Housing Authority program that helps homeless county residents get into housing. Shelter Plus Care is an accurate description of what the program actually does: provide *shelter* to get the homeless off the street, plus the *care* they need so they won't end back on the street.

"I am often asked what is Shelter Plus Care," said Solonia Mack, the Housing Authority's lead occupancy specialist for the program. "The Housing Authority provides the shelter. The Plus Care comes in through our partnering agencies and the supportive services they provide our clients."

The Housing Authority began the Shelter Plus Program in 1997 with a grant from the U.S.

Department of Housing and Urban Development. The purpose is to provide housing to a homeless population that is difficult to house, according to Mack. These are the homeless who are not able to meet the requirements for regular housing subsidies because of disabilities, such as drug or alcohol addiction, mental illness, HIV/AIDS-related illnesses or criminal records.



*Terrance Cooke and Solonia Mack are two of the four JCHA staffers who work to house the homeless.*

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**BATH CRASHERS****Red Hollow Residents to Get Completely Remodeled Bathrooms**

Residents of the Red Hollow community near Center Point should get ready to have their bathrooms “crashed.” Like the lucky families on the popular home makeover TV shows, they soon will get a total bathroom makeover.



In August, the boards of the Jefferson County Housing Authority and the JCHA Development Corp. approved a contract for the bathroom renovations of 24 units at Red Hollow. The apartment community’s other two units, which were heavily damaged by a fire, are in line to get a full apartment makeover. They will be converted into two-bedroom, one-bath, ADA-compliant handicapped units, according to Josh Davis, purchasing and contracting officer for the Housing Authority.

The Red Hollow bathroom remodeling will be similar to the makeover completed last year at the Housing Authority’s Dixi Manor

community, Davis said.

The new baths will include new solid-surface wainscot shower tubs, new tile floors, upgraded sinks, toilets and other fixtures, new windows, lighting and switches. Bathroom walls that were damaged or plagued by wood rot will be repaired. And, of course, the baths will get fresh, new paint.

Davis said the remodeling should start this month, and the work could take anywhere from one to three months.

**COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT*****Brookside Village***

This month’s highlighted community is Brookside Village, located in northwest Jefferson County. The property is managed by LaTrinda Peoples; Nikole Davis is assistant manager. Their office is at Fultondale Village.

Here are some facts about Brookside Village.

**Address:** 187 Village Circle Brookside, AL 35036

**Number of units:** 82

**Type of apartments:** one- to four bedroom, each with one bath. Flat and townhouse units. Some handicap accessible.

**Community amenities:** Community Center and two play grounds.

**When built:** 1952

**Criteria for residents:** Income-based affordable housing.

**What’s new:** The units are now total electric; no gas bill. New Assistant Property Manager, Nikole Davis.

**What makes the community special:** Brookside Village is nestled in a peaceful serene environment filled with beautifully aged trees and greenery.

**From the Manager:** We are currently taking applications for all bedroom sizes.





## Halloween Contest at Spring Gardens

Residents of Spring Gardens joined in the Halloween fun by donning their funniest and scariest outfits for a costume contest at the community center. Prizes were awarded for the top three costumes.

### Shelter Plus Care . . . From Page 1

The HUD grant provides funding for 410 slots. But through cost savings and reinvesting back into the program the rent some are able to pay, the Housing Authority is able to help keep a roof over the heads of 521 clients. Mack and three other JCHA staffers administer the program. They are occupancy specialists Rosalyn Williams and Karen Hall and admissions specialist Terrance Cooke.

Shelter Plus Care is a housing choice voucher program. That means clients can use the voucher to go wherever they want in Jefferson County for housing. Most are in Section 8 housing, but some are in Jefferson County Housing Authority apartments, Mack said.

"This program is considered permanent housing," said Mack. "The difference between this program and regular Section 8 subsidies is that it is strictly for those who are homeless with a disability." She said a critical element of the program is the partnerships with other agencies. The Housing Authority partners with 16 agencies in Jefferson County, including the Salvation Army, AIDS Alabama, Aletheia House, The Foundry, the Lovelady Center, UAB TASC and the Veterans Administration.

To get into Shelter Plus Care, a homeless person must be referred to the Housing Authority by one of the agencies. For each client, the referring agency assigns a caseworker who provides a continuum of care. That includes regular contact with the client, counseling, drug or alcohol treatment and even education.

"The case manager has a case plan set up with the client prior to them coming into housing," Mack said. "In some cases, the case manager makes home visits to check to make sure everything is going well with them."

Drug testing is usually a requirement for people with a substance abuse problem. For those clients who may suffer a relapse, help is provided to try to keep them in the program and housed – and not back on the street.

The goal is to make the client self-sufficient. That is not an easy task because the homeless usually have serious problems to overcome, including criminal records.

"Most, but not all, homeless people have a criminal record," Mack said, noting that the program accepts people who have committed nonviolent crimes. "In connecting with landlords, the program gives people a second chance. This is a second-chance program for a lot of people to get them on their feet."

The program has had numerous success stories.

"We have a lot of people who move out of the program because they get a job and increase their income," Mack said. We also have people who have gone back to school, which enabled them to get a better job with more income. They move on and make room for somebody else."

## COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

SPRING GARDENS will hold a Thanksgiving Lunch for residents on Nov. 20 at 1 p.m. in the community center's dining hall.

SPRING GARDENS' cookbook crafted by the Arts and Craft class is now for sale for \$10. The cookbook contains recipes from residents, friends and staff. Contact the community center.

FROM KEN**Help Make the Upcoming Holidays Joyous and Safe**

With the holiday season fast approaching, this is a wonderful time of the year to take stock of all the blessings for which we are thankful.

Thanksgiving's Day is weeks away. Christmas and the New Year are also on the horizon. The holidays are a season of both thanksgiving and gifts giving. The Thanksgiving meals many of us help prepare for the homeless and needy, our donations to charities, and the Christmas presents we give to our loved ones, neighbors and colleagues, we demonstrate the humble, kind and generous spirit that makes Alabama special.

As the executive director of the Jefferson County Housing Authority, I pray our employees throughout the year reflect such kindness day in and day out as they go about meeting the needs of our tenants.

I also pray our tenants exercise kindness and generosity as well, especially as you interact with each other. Whether it's helping with meals, transportation or daily chores, lending a hand to a neighbor in need is more than a nice thought. It is what Alabamians do.

Of course, please let me or any of our staff know if you or a neighbor have a special need or require help that we can provide. Contact us if you are having problems with your apartment, utilities or anything related to housing. We are here to serve you.

If you need assistance, please first contact the management office in your community.

**Be Safe Out There**

Remember, too, that the holidays are a prime time for thieves. They often target distracted, gift-buying shoppers, and homes and cars where presents are visible.

When shopping, be careful not to leave items in plain sight in your car. Put them in the trunk if possible. Also, be on the alert for pickpockets and purse-grabbers. And at home, never leave presents, electronics and other valuable items visible through windows, so as not to provide targets for burglars.

Certainly, enjoy all the festivities, family get-togethers and activities with friends during this special time of the year. But also be mindful not to let the Grinch steal your Christmas or ruin your Thanksgiving.

May you and your loved ones have a joyous and safe Thanksgiving and Christmas season!



*Ken Vaughan*  
Executive Director

**JEFFERSON COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY****ABOUT US**

THE JEFFERSON COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY WAS INCORPORATED ON OCTOBER 15, 1941, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SAFE AND SANITARY HOUSING FOR QUALIFIED LOW INCOME PERSONS RESIDING IN THE JEFFERSON COUNTY AREA. WE ARE GOVERNED BY A FIVE MEMBER BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, EACH APPOINTED BY THE JEFFERSON COUNTY COMMISSION.

**OUR VISION**

IMPROVING COMMUNITY QUALITY AND PROMOTING SELF SUFFICIENCY THROUGH THE INCREASED AVAILABILITY OF HOUSING AND RELATED SERVICES FOR LOW TO MODERATE INCOME FAMILIES AND THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION.

**OUR BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

NOLANDA HATCHER CHAIR  
MICHAEL J. DAVIS II VICE CHAIR  
JANE BAILEY MEMBER  
SAM PARKER MEMBER  
CHARLES HARRIS RESIDENT MEMBER

**OUR EXECUTIVE STAFF**

DIRECTOR KEN VAUGHAN  
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING PROGRAMS JUDY BRYANT  
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE HANNAH GORE

**OUR OFFICE**

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**OUR OFFICE HOURS**

MONDAYS THURSDAYS: 7:30 A.M. TO 5 P.M.  
FRIDAYS: 7:30 A.M. TO 11:30 A.M.