

Tales of TAHRA



News and information for members and friends
of the Tennessee Association of Housing and
Redevelopment Authorities

Informing TAHRA Members and Friends Since 1984

Winter 2011-12

TAHRA's 72nd Annual Meeting Explores "Getting Good at Barely Getting By"

More than 200 housing authority personnel, exhibitors and speakers gathered in Nashville for another successful annual meeting. The scholarship committee held its annual John Acuff/TAHRA scholarship golf tournament with 26 golfers. The sessions presented were: *How SBA Can Help*; Walter N. Perry, III, SBA, *First Aid for Commissioners*; William Crown, *Energy Performance Contracting Can Work for Small PHAs*, Wind, Water and Energy Conservation, *What the Heck is Going on in Washington?*; Tim Kaiser, PHADA, *What All PHAs Should Know About the Annual Independent Audit*; Patrick Kent, Henderson & Hill, *Social Media*; Jeff Jones and Heather Thorne, Wimberly Lawson, *Family Medical Leave Act*; Mary Dee Allen, Wimberly Lawson, and *Section 8 Update*; Don Clem, HUD. The keynote address was given by Kevin King. A tour of MDHA's renovated high rise development was also conducted. An evening event was held at the Country Music hall of Fame and Museum with a tour, dinner and entertainment by Jeff Allen.



One of the TAHRA Annual Meeting highlights was
Dinner at the Country Music Hall of Fame!

(Continued on Page 3)

Also In This Issue!

- Message From TAHRA President John Snodderly-Pg. 2
- TAHRA Memories - Pg. 2
- Procurement Corner - Pg. 3
- KCDC restores historic school as Sr. housing - Pg. 5
- TAHRA Newsletter Contest-Pg. 7
- Middle TN Directors meet with elected representatives - Pg. 8

Upcoming Events 2012

- TAHRA Spring Workshop.
April 16-19 Franklin TN
- Executive Director Retreat
July 15-17—Memphis, TN
- 2011 TAHRA Annual Meeting
Sept. 23 - 25—Gatlinburg, TN

National Council of State Housing Agencies Honors THDA again

AWARDED FOR THE FIFTH YEAR IN A ROW

The Emergency Repair Program for the Elderly at Tennessee Housing Development Agency was recognized with the Award for Program Excellence by the National Council of State Housing Agencies.

"We are pleased to be recognized by our peers," said Laura Sinclair, chief program officer. "We are quite proud of the Emergency Repair Program. It helps a homeowner of very low income keep her or his home in good repair which is good for the owner, and for the whole community. Partnerships with local administrators and contractors have been very effective." The Emergency Repair Program (ERP) is part of the Tennessee Housing Trust Fund which was started in 2006 with THDA profits, state funding and matching funds generated through other sources. The ERP has helped 1,191 elderly households of very low income (at or below 50% of area median income) correct, repair or replace an essential system and/or a critical structural problem. The purpose of these grants is to stabilize a homeowner's housing situation, making essential repairs to make the home habitable.

While the direct benefit of this program was obvious to the recipients, their neighbors, and fellow community members, the indirect economic impact of the multi-million dollar program was substantial. This is the fifth year for THDA to receive an award voted on by other housing finance agencies and private housing industry representatives.



Message from TAHRA President John Snodderly

I am honored to begin my presidency of TAHRA and look forward to leading us through the next two years. In the upcoming year, we are all facing uncertain times with the offset of operating subsidy as it relates to reserves and also the possible new scoring for PHAS. We at TAHRA commit to provide you with the utmost training and knowledge to help you deal with the obstacles we face in the day to day operation of our housing authorities.

Our board of directors, committee chairs and committee members recently met at Fall Creek



Falls for our strategic planning meeting and exciting things are being planned. I encourage all of you to become involved and let us know ways we can improve to make your TAHRA membership better. Membership renewals for 2012 will be sent in December and I would like to thank each of you for your continued support of TAHRA. I would also like to thank Donna, the committee chairs and committee members for your help on a smooth transition.

As I write this, we are nearing the beginning of our holiday season and I would like to wish each and every one of you a happy holiday season!

John

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Donna Baumgartner, TAHRA Executive Director

I love the quickly approaching season; Thanksgiving - a time to remember how we are blessed followed by Christmas - a time to give to those we love. Take a moment to count your blessings and all those who have blessed you. Remember how important the work that you do is and the lives that you help bless. I am thankful for the opportunity to work with all of you and realize and appreciate how dedicated you are in providing services to the people in your community.

TAHRA Memories by Bo Pierce, TAHRA Historian

Leon Bryant...talk about TAHRA Memories. Talk about TAHRA history!

Leon was born, raised, educated, employed, and continues to reside in beautiful Cocke County in East Tennessee. Leon went to Carson Newman for a year or so but then he had the opportunity to become employed as a traffic manager for a local trucking company. He continued in that field and eventually owned a trucking company. Leon's life changed in 1971 when he became the Executive Director of the Newport Housing Authority (NHA). I did not know Leon then, but I can only imagine he brought his organizational management skills from the trucking industry to the public housing industry. And the rest is indeed, History, especially around Newport. I first met Leon around 1980. I did not know it at the time but Leon was beginning to go back to school, part-time, to continue his education. He received an Associate Degree from Walters State in 1985. In 2000, at 59 years of age, Leon graduated from the University of Tennessee with a B.S. in Human Ecology. AND, he graduated Magna Cum Laude! That's Latin, meaning with high honors! When I finally graduated, all I got was a few "Lawdy, Lawdy's".

Under Leon Bryant's leadership, Newport Housing Authority constructed and rehabilitated many units of badly needed housing in the Newport area. Perhaps the "crown jewel" was the complicated financing and challenging architectural rehabilitation of the Historic Rhea-Sims Hotel, which added 17 units to Newport's portfolio in 2002. Leon continued increasing opportunities for the young people of NHA and Newport and Cocke County with the opening of a 10,800 square foot facility leased to the Boys & Girls Club in 2008.

The last construction project Leon participated in was the development of a new Administration Building for Newport Housing Authority utilizing "green technology". The ribbon was cut on November 20, 2009 for the Leon Bryant Administration Building. In typical Leon style, he protested naming the building for him. But, the NHA Board, the Newport community, and many friends across the State of Tennessee think it was, and is, a fitting HONOR for Leon, prior to his retirement.

It was a pleasure to see Leon at our Annual Meeting in Nashville, and it was also fitting for Leon to be recognized at our closing breakfast and to receive a standing ovation from the TAHRA membership: an Honor well deserved after 40 years of service.



Bo and Leon—9-20-2011



P-R: Jeanne Y. Wilson-Newport City Council, Newport Mayor Fred M. Valentine, Leon Bryant NHA, ED in 1973

Cooperative Purchasing

by Terry Mckee



“Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) & Cooperative Purchasing”

There is confusion about recent revisions to TCA Sec. 12-03-1009. During this past legislative session, the General Assembly attempted to clean up legislation from the previous year concerning cooperative purchasing in Tennessee. Unfortunately the changes tended to confuse many people. Fortunately Steve Cates, the Commissioner of the Department of General Services for the State, understands the intent of the legislation. His memo to the Special Assistant to the Governor says the people have misinterpreted this legislation. The legislation was brought by the Tennessee Municipal League to clean up Part B which was intended to apply to cooperatives with entities outside the state. Part A applies to in-state and remains unchanged. Thus governmental units in Tennessee may participate in cooperative purchasing arrangements with other governmental units in or outside of Tennessee. Hopefully this clarifies it for us all. If you want a copy of the memo for your files or If I can be of help to you, feel free to contact me: tmckee@kcdc.org .

(Annual Meeting-Continued from Page 1)

A special thanks to our exhibitors: **Barge Cauthen & Associates, Inc., Brown Stove Works, Inc., Bug Busters USA, Canterbury Enterprises, Inc., General Electric Company, Gilson Software Solutions, HD Supply, Honeywell International, Inc., Housing Agency Retirement Trust, Housing Authority Insurance Group, Housing Benefits Plan/Mercer Health & Benefits, Kidz Zone Play Systems, Lansing Housing Products, Inc., Lindsey Software Systems, Marketing Associates Plus, Inc., Marvin Windows and Doors, Michael Brady, Inc., Nan McKay and Associates, Pepco Energy Services, Quaker Window Products, Resolution, Inc., SACS Software, Tenant PI, Tenmast Software, Tennessee Community Assistance Corporation, TMS South, Trimen Computer Systems, LLC, Wind, Water and Energy Conservation, LLC, and Wright Computer Services, Inc.** Please support these companies which support our association!

A special thanks to our annual meeting sponsors: **Barge Cauthen and Associates, Inc., Michael Brady, Inc., Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Services, Inc., Ledford Engineering and Planning, LLC and Metropolitan Development Housing Agency** and our many scholarship golf tournament sponsors.

Make plans to join us for our 73rd annual meeting, September 23 – 25, 2012 in Gatlinburg!



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Kingsport Housing and Redevelopment Authority A 252 Panel Solar Photovoltaic System for Riverview Community Center



Through the installation of this system, the Kingsport Housing and Redevelopment Authority has taken a lead role providing a long-term, sustainable energy efficiency improvement for not only the Community Center, but the entire City itself.

Please contact MBI for more detailed information.



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Trenton Housing Working Toward Better After School Programs with Tennessee Education Department

The State of Tennessee, Department of Education administers over \$ 30 million of federal and state funding dedicated to extending learning opportunities for at risk students. Rhonda Casey , Director of Housing at the Trenton Housing Authority, has been invited to serve as a member of the Extended Learning Advisory Committee for the State of Tennessee Department of Education. The committee consists of twenty other members from across Tennessee and serves to identify the strategies and resources needed to achieve optimum academic benefits.

Through the State of Tennessee Department of Education, Casey has written and received over \$500,000.00 in after school LEAPs grant awards and \$ 130,000.00 in Youth Grants and Service Learning opportunities. The newly established advisory committee Casey has joined will review desired outcomes for the extended learning programs in Tennessee. The team will develop state- wide strategies to ensure a strong collaboration between schools and other community and faith-based organizations. A high quality training and technical component will be developed to enable teachers and tutors to utilize the most current information and academic skill building activities.

Casey administers the Trenton Housing Authority after school program with the assistance of an excellent tutoring staff and supportive Executive Director, Doug Lockard. Working in collaboration with the Trenton Special School District the program serves over 80 students five days per week and offers an academic enrichment and recreation program during the summer months. Recognizing the importance of partnering with other agencies, Casey has developed relationships with the Department of Health, UT Extension, The Exchange Club Carl Perkins, YMCA, Coordinated School Health and other agencies that provide programs for the students enrolled. The first meeting of the Advisory Committee was held in Nashville on October 19th. The group participated in a roundtable discussion on developing ways of improving programs and addressing student and family needs of high risk areas in Tennessee. In Photo: Rhonda Casey, Trenton Housing, Laura Nichols, Dept of Ed, Kim Dabney, Dept of Ed



New Officers Elected for 2011-2013 at the TAHRA Annual Business Meeting



<i>John Snodderly, LaFollette Housing Authority</i>	<i>President</i>
<i>Jon Wells, Lafayette Housing Authority</i>	<i>Senior Vice President</i>
<i>Christi Billings, Covington Housing Authority</i>	<i>Vice President – Member Services</i>
<i>Lori Everett, Loudon Housing Authority</i>	<i>Vice President - Housing</i>
<i>Micheal Miller, Bolivar Housing Authority</i>	<i>Vice President – Professional Development</i>
<i>Joyce Floyd, KCDC</i>	<i>Vice President - Commissioners</i>
<i>Melba Johnson, Lexington Housing Authority</i>	<i>Past President</i>

SERC/SWRC Housing Benefits Plan specializes in saving money for Housing Authorities with no Health Insurance cost increase for 2012

One of the biggest problems facing housing authorities these days, or any employer for that matter, is the high cost of providing health care benefits for employees.

And as many people these days are moving to credit unions for their banking services because credit unions are not for profit. In the same way, a nonprofit, cooperative health care insurance provider is one way to save money on ever rising health insurance costs.

The Southeastern and Southwestern regions of NAHRO formed the cooperative medical plans and combined efforts together to form Housing Benefits Plan in 1996 as a voluntary employee's beneficiary association. The program had its beginnings back as far as 1981 and currently insures some 1187 housing authority employees in the southern and southwestern United States. In Tennessee 18 housing authorities are participating in the Housing Benefits Plan.

According to a report released by Kaiser Foundation earlier this year the annual premium for family coverage surpassed \$15,000 for the first time this year and prices continue to rise. Housing Benefits Plan will not raise their rates for the coming year and no increases will even be considered until 2013. If your housing authority would like to have more information contact James E. Relyea with Mercer Health & Benefits LLC at (312) 917-9217 or email him at james.e.relyea@mercer.com

KCDC Opens New Senior Housing in Restored Elementary School

By Moxley Carmichael About 200 people attended Knoxville's Community Development Corporation's (KCDC) open house at its new housing complex for seniors, the Residences at Eastport, Sept. 23.

During the open house, potential residents, community leaders and the general public toured a model unit. KCDC staff members answered questions and helped seniors with the application process.

Shuttles ran every 15 minutes from the Walter P. Taylor Homes leasing office and Harvest Plaza on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

The Residences at Eastport are an affordable 85-unit development. Twenty-five of the units are housed in the former Eastport Elementary school building. The building retains the façade of the historic school, which is believed to be the first African American school in the Five Points neighborhood. The property is the newest apartment complex for seniors, age 62 and older, in the area.

"The Residences at Eastport are specially designed to accommodate the needs of our aging population in a comfortable community-style living environment," Alvin Nance, executive director and CEO of KCDC, said. "We are excited to unveil our newest housing complex, the initial step towards our goal of the revitalization of the Five Points area."

Upon completion, the complex is expected to receive a LEED for Homes certification for its cost-efficiency and energy savings, furthering KCDC's mission of improving and transforming neighborhoods to promote sustainability and self-sufficiency.

KCDC is the housing authority and redevelopment agency for Knoxville. Since 1936, KCDC has been dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for the citizens of Knoxville. For more information, visit <http://www.kcdc.org>.



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TAHRA Golf Tournament Winning Teams



The 1st place team Ross Dodson, Will Dodson, Bob Bush and James Bush.



2nd place team: Michael Farmer, Robert Farmer, James Thomas and Robert Williams.

Congratulations to the following winners of the 2011 Resident Newsletter Contest.

Each 1st place winner receives a cash prize of \$75 and the 2 entries randomly drawn receive a \$25 cash prize.

Thanks to all who participated!

1st Place Winners:

- Small: Jellico Housing Authority
- Medium: McMinnville Housing Authority
- Large: Cookeville Housing Authority
- Extra Large: Jackson Housing Authority

Random entry drawing:

Gallatin Housing Authority & Shelbyville Housing Authority



Cookeville Housing Authority's Teens Need Training wrapped up a fantastic summer youth program with up to 14 youth, ages 10 – 17 meeting 3 days a week for 5 weeks. Activities included: cooking, nutrition & etiquette lessons, visiting a bank, swimming, hiking, bowling, movies and visits to museums. The teens also completed 2 community service projects; visiting housing veterans & working with the Clean Commission. Shown here are the teens on the steps at the Bicentennial Mall Park after a visit to the Tennessee State Museum to see the King Tut and other exhibits.



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Middle TN Executive Directors Discuss HUD Budget Concerns

The Middle TN EDs met at Murfreesboro Housing Authority on Oct. 12 2011, to discuss the proposed HUD Reserve Recapture. Hershel Thrasher, ED from Shelbyville worked diligently to have Congressional representation from both US Senator's and two Congressman's offices attend this meeting. Each of the 15 PHAs represented explained how much money they could lose under the Senate and House proposals to recapture Operating Reserves and the potential damage to their housing authority from this recapture. The Director's were very pleased with the exchange and discussions that followed.

Pictured L-R: Hershel Thrasher, ED, Shelbyville HA; Michael Schulz, Field Representative, Senator Lamar Alexander; Carlie Crenshaw Cruse, Field Director, Senator Bob Corker; Beth Cope, Field Representative, Congressman Diane Black; Cade Cothren, Field Representative, Congressman Scott DesJarlais.



TALES OF TAHRA Welcomes Your Comments and Article Submissions!

Comments can be sent to Donna Baumgartner, TAHRA Executive Director or any member of the TAHRA Board. Article submissions should be emailed to Tales Editor, Jim Young at talesofTAHRA@gmail.com - mailed to Jim at Crossville Housing Authority, P.O. Box 425, Crossville TN 38557 or faxed to Jim's attention at (931) 456-1513. We are looking for articles of interest to HA's across Tennessee concerning interesting problem solutions and new programs that could be replicated at other HA's. Previous issues can be found online at <http://talesoftahra.googlepages.com>

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE January 25, 2011 for Publication February 2011.