

The Bulletin

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Thomas Bleeker and Riley Douglas unload donated items for families at The Vista.

Families get big support in time for holidays

A week before Christmas, four families at Montgomery Village lost their possessions and residences due to arson. Not only did our KCDC team step up to get the families into new units quickly, but our community partners came together to replace the household items and ensure the children involved had a good Christmas in their new homes.

Faith Coffman, KCDC AmeriCorps for Partnerships, coordinated with community partners who gave \$10,000 in cash and items for the families.

We are very thankful for the partners who stepped up in a big way this holiday season!

Organizations involved:

- Kingdom Faith Church
- Legacy Housing Foundation/ Phil Lawson
- Mt. Olive Baptist Church
- Catholic Charities of East Tennessee
- Knoxville Dream Center
- Compassion Coalition

Individuals involved:

- Mark Bascome
- Celeste Hearn
- Jason Scott
- Rob Booher
- Carol Nickel

Residents say 'thanks'

Last month families were given a few follow-up gifts and wrote thank-you notes for everyone who helped make the best of a rough situation.

For Jasmine at Montgomery Village, these presents ensured her two daughters, ages 2 and 4, had something they could rip open and play with for at least a little while.

"It means everything," Jasmine said. "I bought all my Christmas presents and they all burned down in that house, so I had to completely restart. The fact that everybody brought me some good presents for my kids so they could have a good Christmas, it was the best."

Christy and her wife Rachel are now at The Vista. Christy said the hardest part was losing invaluable family items, but both are getting the hang of living in a new location months after moving to Montgomery Village.

"We truly appreciate everything everyone has come forward to do to help us," Christy said. "Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!"

For Jacqueline the transition to The Vista was maybe a little easier after having lived there several years ago when her son was in high school. Now she finds herself in the same building.

"The older apartment is just upstairs," Jacqueline said.

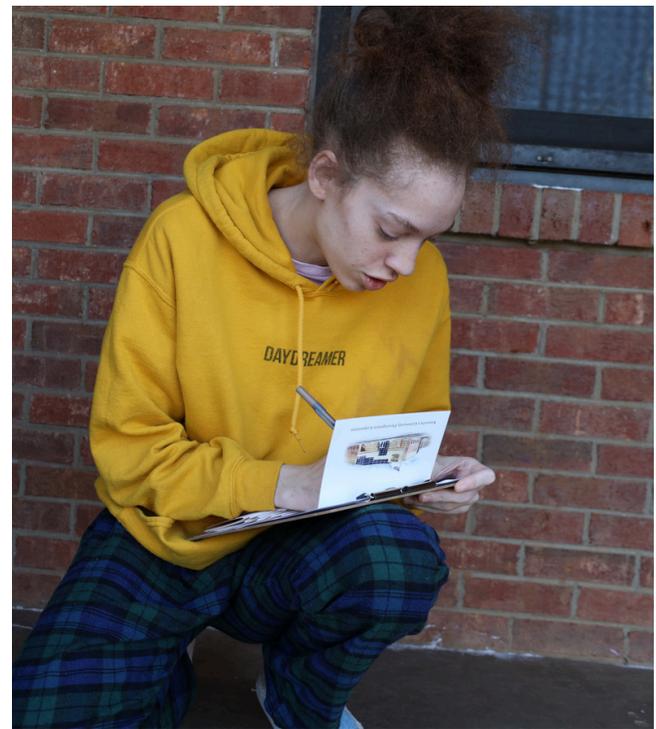
Although there's still a ways to go before she gets fully used to her new home, Jacqueline said the donated items make a difference.

"It's meant a lot because we're still working on getting stuff, but I mean what we did get was very helpful," she said. "It's been an experience."

“
The fact that everybody brought me some good presents for my kids so they could have a good Christmas, it was the best.
 -Jasmine
 ”



Thank You



Leadership Additions

We recently hired two new people who will provide valuable leadership experience to KCDC. Sabrina Draplin fills an 18-month vacancy at Vice President of Housing. She most recently served as Director of Operations for Hunt Companies. Sabrina brings with her an extensive background in housing operations leadership, with a resume consisting of tactical and strategic experience in leading large multi-faceted housing enterprises.

Joe LaCroix takes up the role as Information Technology Director, which was held by Procurement Director Terry McKee. Joe most recently served as City of Farragut IT Director. He brings to KCDC seasoned experience in IT with a concentration in the public sector.



Sabrina Draplin
Vice President of Housing

Q. How long have you been in this line of business?

For 20 years I have worked in property management leadership roles that include marketing, Section 8, conventional, tax-credit and senior housing.

Q. What makes you passionate about your career?

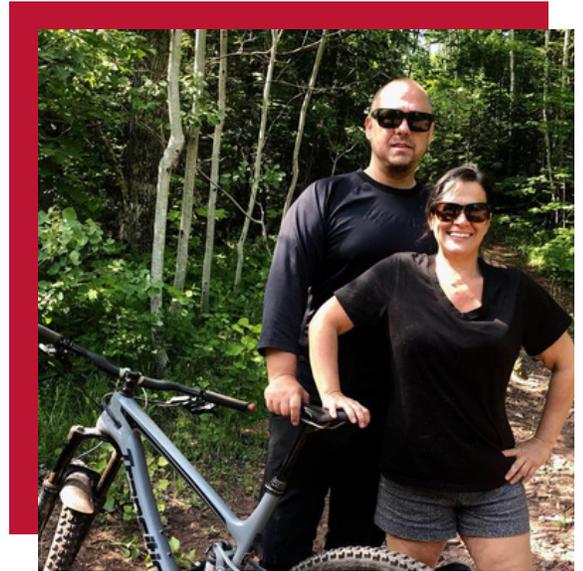
Really being able to develop others and to create a team environment where everyone adds value.

Q. What's your philosophy?

I believe in having friendly teams with positive attitudes as everything starts from there. If you don't have people who care, nothing else will work as it should. In addition, I believe in being efficient and that everything we do should have a purpose. That could mean a short-term goal of making someone's day or a long-term property financial goal, but if our actions don't align with our overall goals then we are focusing on the wrong things.

Q. What's got you most excited now that you're with KCDC?

I am most excited about working with a great group of people who obviously care a great deal about what they do. In my role I can support the teams that are making the positive impact to our residents' lives and that gives me a great deal of pride in KCDC.





Q. What are your goals for the first 90 days?

I am most interested in getting to know the teams, the properties and their challenges so I can make decisions about the best way to support them and help them achieve their goals.

Q. What else do you want people to know?

Professionally, people should know I am very honest and direct. I am also deeply committed to everyone’s development and involvement. I want people to be equally as honest and direct with me so we can get to our goals that much faster, and have fun doing it. Personally, I moved here with my longtime boyfriend and our dogs. We love Tennessee and the mountains and are very excited to be here. I have a daughter who lives in D.C. and son who is attending college in Michigan.



Q. What are your hobbies?

My hobbies include hiking, traveling, boating, tennis, baking and tennis.



Joe LaCroix
Information Technology Director

Q. How long have you been in this line of business?

I started working in the IT industry in 1990 as a database administrator for a very large law firm in South Florida. I quickly learned that coding was not what interested me, so I found my way into help desk support, what I call break/fix. I moved from help desk support to a help desk supervisor and then into system working on Novell Netware and Microsoft Server operating systems. In 1998 I was immersed into the world of bleeding edge networking technology working with intelligent switches and routers. Very new tech at the time.

After going public with that company, I took some time off in 2001 to raise my young son and when I reentered the job market in 2002 I started as an IT Manager for a regional-sized CPA firm.

In 2007 I first entered public sector employment as an IT Manager for a special taxing district, a fire department on a barrier island in Florida. In 2016 I moved to Knoxville to work for a local municipality as the IT Manager and then landed here at KCDC in January.

Q. What makes you passionate about your career?

What makes me most passionate about information technology is that it is a service-oriented career where the things I do help my clients to better their workday through more efficient processes supported by technology.

Q. What's your philosophy?

There is always room for improvement. I think that learning is an everyday goal and I actually have that as a top priority today. Learning is the act of improvement as a result of experiences and growth, gaining new skills and understandings, and integrating those things into a set of values.



Q. What's got you most excited now that you're with KCDC?

One of the things that most excites me about KCDC is serving our community of residents. I am very passionate about affordable housing and all of our programs and this stems from my childhood where my family faced challenges at times. I learned at that time that without food and shelter, a person has a hard time making decisions that can positively affect the rest of their lives.

Q. What are your goals for the first 90 days?

Learning the culture, interpersonal relationships, goals and objectives of KCDC is the goal I have for the first 90 days. I would like to have a plan in place to exploit technology to assist the entire organization in achieving all of our goals. The IT team is fantastic and has the day-to-day support of the organization clicking along nicely so I have few worries there.

Q. What else do you want people to know?

I have two amazing children who make me very proud. Every day they amaze me. I have been married to my wife for 32 years and she is my greatest supporter. I am a lifelong learner and would like to continue with my education although I have not decided on my next area of study.



Q. What are your hobbies?

Any type of two-wheel mayhem! Traveling with my wife.

Health & Wellness

February is National Heart Month. Below are blood pressure guidelines and facts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

- Having hypertension puts you at risk for [heart disease](#) and [stroke](#), which are leading causes of death in the United States.
- In 2020 more than 670,000 deaths in the United States had hypertension as a primary or contributing cause.
- Nearly half of adults in the United States (47% or 116 million) have hypertension, defined as a systolic blood pressure greater than 130 mmHg or a diastolic blood pressure greater than 80 mmHg or are taking medication for hypertension.
- Only about one in four adults (24%) with hypertension have their condition under control.
- About half of adults (45%) with uncontrolled hypertension have a blood pressure of 140/90 mmHg or higher. This includes 37 million U.S. adults.
- About 34 million adults who are recommended to take medication may need it to be prescribed and to start taking it. Almost two out of three of this group (19 million) have a blood pressure of 140/90 mmHg or higher.
- High blood pressure costs the United States about \$131 billion each year, averaged over 12 years from 2003 to 2014.



Guidelines

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic Blood Pressure		Diastolic Blood Pressure
Normal	<120 mmHg	and	<80 mmHg
Elevated	120-129 mmHg	and	<80 mmHg
Hypertension			
Stage 1	130-139 mmHg	or	80-89 mmHg
Stage 2	≥140 mmHg	or	≥90 mmHg

Please visit [here](#) for more blood pressure resources including a tool kit from the CDC.

New Hires

The following were recently hired at KCDC:



Name: Joe LaCroix
Date of Hire: 1/3/23
Title: IT Director
Location: Executive Suite-Main Office



Name: John Turner
Date of Hire: 1/10/23
Title: Real Estate Associate
Location: Redevelopment-Main Office



Name: Sabrina Draplin
Date of Hire: 1/4/23
Title: Vice President of Housing
Location: Executive Suite-Main Office



Name: David McAndrews
Date of Hire: 1/2/23
Title: Accountant
Location: Accounting-Main Office

Thank You

Leadership staff recently visited several places and offered a warm breakfast as a token of gratitude for all the hard work that's done daily. Thanks for all that you do for KCDC and the residents it serves. Without you we don't know where we would be.



Year in Review

Let's review some exciting things 2022 had to offer for KCDC and the community.

Little Free Library at The Vista

Rotary Club of Knoxville and KCDC representatives in February cut a ribbon and officially opened a Little Free Library at The Vista. The Little Free Library is the second one the Rotary Club has with KCDC, with the other being at Western Heights. The library provides books to children and adults as requested in the area.



Love Towers Renovations Complete

Guy B. Love Towers was officially reopened in March following a \$6.5 million renovation for the high-rise community. Renovations included new cabinets, lighting and heating and air conditioning units that align with KCDC's sustainability and energy-efficiency initiatives. In addition, improvements outside included an urban wildlife habitat, a certified butterfly garden and community gardens.



First Creek Phase 1 Ribbon Cutting

KCDC and community representatives in May cut the ribbon to the first of three phases for First Creek at Austin, the city's first mixed-income, affordable housing community. Phase 1 includes 105 units that will certainly provide much-needed affordable housing to residents in Knoxville.



HUD Celebration



KCDC in September celebrated a \$40 million HUD Choice Neighborhoods Grant. Funds will go toward revamping the Western Heights community and the surrounding area with enhanced access to housing, transportation, youth development and economic opportunity. Including the grant, more than \$220 million has been committed to the Transforming Western initiative.

Little Free Library at Lonsdale

The Christman Company and KCDC representatives in September cut a ribbon and officially opened a Little Free Library at Lonsdale.



Western Heights Head Start Opening

KCDC and CAC in October officially opened the Western Heights Head Start facility. The \$5.4 million facility offers Head Start and Early Head Start programming by CAC to children up to 5 years old. More than 130 children will attend the local facility.

Matter Health Partnership

KCDC and Matter Health throughout 2022 saw their partnership blossom with the opening of wellness centers at Isabella Towers, Cagle Terrace and Northgate Terrace. A fourth is scheduled to open this year at Guy B. Love Towers. Wellness centers offer residents an opportunity for on-site medical attention.



KCDC Spotlight

The Spotlight aims to recognize the amazing things KCDC employees are doing to help make the community and workplace better. Email jnash@kcdc.org if you think there's someone we should highlight.

Joy Patrick Executive Assistant

If you've worked at KCDC for even a month, there's a good chance you've seen longtime employee Joy Patrick for something on the top floor of the main office.

For nearly two decades she's served as executive assistant. Her priority is to Executive Director and CEO Ben Bentley and the Board of Commissioners, but make no mistake, she works with several of KCDC's departments — completing pay orders, paying invoices, reconciling PCards, answering department calls, fixing paper jams, ordering lunches, and even "helping secure IT's job security." She jokingly said just ask IT Analyst Eric Bellamy.

"The list is ongoing. I may get a new job duty tomorrow,"

Joy said. "... My title should be EMT Office Manager as I help in several departments on a daily basis. I do like the variety. I don't like to be bored or have the same daily dull schedule. My least favorite is making coffee but will in an emergency — I hate the smell and taste. Diet Mountain Dew is my caffeine."

Prior to her current role, Joy served as legal assistant to Bass, Berry & Sims PLC, KCDC's legal firm. She applied for the executive assistant role in 2005 when it became available. August will now be her 18th anniversary with the company, a time she said has flown by.



Joy Patrick, left, takes a moment to speak with Donna Martin.

“*My philosophy is to be professional and courteous.*”

"I think partly because I'm very busy when in or out of the office and partly because time flies when you get older," Joy said.

Throughout her time, she's worked with three executive directors. Of course, with a smile, she said Ben's her favorite because he was the "easiest to train."

"I have been so blessed to have had them," she said. "All of them have been easygoing."

Joy's kept a sound philosophy throughout her career — just be calm and efficient.

"My philosophy is to be professional and courteous," Joy said. "I get many calls from residents and non-residents that can be very nasty as they don't want to take no for an answer for whatever reason. I don't take their words or attitude personally and have no trouble letting them rant and rave until they will run out of steam.

"Do you know if you don't argue or raise your voice to an angry person they'll calm

down and talk to you in a decent manner? You can't argue with a person who doesn't argue," she added.

When she's not in the office, Joy can be found with her family. She's happily married with two sons and one stepson. She's also a grandmother to two grandchildren under 2 years old and two in their teens.

"I really can't believe I'm old enough for that," Joy said. "I'm also very involved in my church and in the summer, you'll find me in my back yard in my pool. ... When I started KCDC it was racquetball and line dancing. Now that I'm an old married lady I love to read, play board games or cards.

"I do a fair amount of entertaining with friends and family," she added. "I visit the beach 2-3 times a year with friends and/or my husband."

Joy has no plans to retire anytime soon, at least not for four or five more years.

"Unless Ben changes my mind," she said with a laugh. "... My husband is going to be 65 this year and he's going to retire. He's ready for me to retire when he does, but I mean I really like my job. For me it's just easy because I know how to do what I'm doing."

Community Focus

The Focus aims to provide a little more information about each of KCDC's communities.

Autumn Landing



Located in northwest Knox County, Autumn Landing is one of 13 Family communities in the KCDC portfolio. The property has been in the KCDC portfolio since September 2009, and it's one of only two properties outside of the Knoxville city limits, with the other being Nature's Cove.

The 102-unit community is a straight Project-Based Rental Assistance property which follows annual income limits set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, currently ranging from \$45,750 for a one-person household to \$96,650 for a 10-person household.

Autumn Landing was initially called Virginia Walker Apartments but was rebranded in 2012 to provide a clean slate for KCDC and offer residents a chance to name the community.

That same year the property went through renovations, including the installation of security cameras and replacement of appliances, flooring, PTAC units, roofing and later waterlines and other infrastructure items.

Renovations to Autumn Landing and Nature's Cove were bid together and were afforded with the financial help from Community Development Block Grants through Knox County. The combined project total was \$729,825.

Autumn Landing's current property manager is Darrell Lindsey. The property has units ranging in one to four bedrooms.



Editor's Note



Jeremy Nash

With this being the first newsletter of the year, I'd like to formally introduce myself and say a little bit about my background. For a year I've served here as communications coordinator, a time I'd say has been a fun and welcoming experience. Prior to my time here, I served nearly nine years at a small news outlet in Loudon County where we published two weekly papers and one quarterly magazine. I initially served as a reporter/columnist and then eventually worked my way up to news editor/reporter/columnist. Before that I did some freelance work.

I have a passion for informing readers of what's happening, what's planned and what's occurred. This is where I tie all this back to the newsletter.

I want this to be a newsletter you can look at and learn something. Maybe there's someone you've seen around the office, but you don't know much about them other than you pass each other in the hallway. Maybe you know KCDC manages different communities, but you don't know anything else about them beyond that. I want this newsletter to show the fun and exciting things each community is doing. I want this to be a newsletter that celebrates the hard work each of you put in day in and day out to support residents.

No matter how big or small, if you think there's something worth noting in here, please send it my way at jnash@kcdc.org and I'll be happy to look at it.

My hope is to have this newsletter published every couple months — unless something unexpected happens. I'm excited to see how this newsletter grows over time.

CIC CALENDAR

Below are upcoming events for the Community Involvement Committee:

- **March Madness — March 14-April 3** — Fill out brackets distributed to you and turn them in to Peter McKay at First Creek for a chance to win a prize if you're within the top 3. Brackets will be scored using the 1-2-4-8-16-32 system which will be explained when they are distributed. The department/property with the highest average score will also receive a donut/coffee breakfast.

Newsletter Dates

The Bulletin is scheduled to be released every two months. Publication should fall on the first full week of the month.

- **March-April Edition:** March 6-10
- **May-June Edition:** May 1-5
- **July-August Edition:** July 3-7
- **September-October Edition:** Sept. 4-8
- **November-December Edition:** Nov. 6-10

