

# MAYWOOD HERALD

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## Senior Help Program

### Express H.O.M.E. Program

*(Helping Others Magnify Education)*

P.O. Box 49721

(706) 543-9994

### Teens assist seniors

By CYNTHIA COONEY  
STAFF WRITER

People helping people is the concept behind a summer program in Maywood that involves both teenagers and senior citizens.

The Summer Help Program, which is in the middle of its second year, is one in which teenagers work for seniors by doing such things as housework, gardening, and running errands.

Jackie Bosby, a former Maywood village employee, founded the program with the assistance of her daughters, JaTaryia and Knikita Hill.

"The idea for this kind of program first occurred to me about five years ago," said Bosby. "It took a couple years to get it going."

A \$2,000 grant from the Community and Economic Development Association made the program possible this year. The money is used to pay the five teenage girls who participate \$5 per hour.

Three girls worked Thursday to help out Leola Gaddie, who lives on 10th Avenue.

"These girls are great," Gaddie said. "They did some gardening and now they are sweeping and doing other cleaning in my house."

JaTaryia Hill, who was also involved in the program last summer, said it is very rewarding "to do jobs for people that they can't do for themselves."

Even though she was not paid for it, Hill continued helping seniors throughout the school year.

"We are only paid for the summer and only on weekdays," Hill said. "Any other time it's volunteer, but I like doing it anyway."

"Sometimes the seniors just want someone to talk to and you can tell they really



Tamara Bell/Pioneer Press

Sonya Frazier is involved in a summer help program to spruce up seniors' homes.

enjoy just having the company."

During the months that the girls are not paid, Bosby said, they are rewarded in other ways.

"Since they don't get any money I try to plan things

that they would like to do like going out to dinner or a trip to Great America," she added.

Four of the girls work in pairs. Hill and Monique Fisher are team captains who work with Sonya Frazier

and Elisha McPherson. They are all students at Proviso East High School.

Knikita Hill, who is 19 years old, is the driver when the girls accompany someone to do an errand or

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Tamara Bell/Pioneer Press

Teens (from left) Sonya Frazier, Elisha McPherson and JaTaryia Hill are working this summer to help seniors do yard work and

clean their homes. To schedule the girls through the Community and Economic Development Association, call 681-5775.

### ■ Teens aid seniors

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go to the grocery store.

Maywood resident Laura Rowan, who coordinates the girls' schedules, is a key part of the effort as well.

This summer, as word of the program has spread, Bosby said, there have been many more seniors calling to ask for assistance.

"We are supposed to be getting two more teens through CEDA to help us, but I'm not sure of that," Bosby added.

The summer program will continue through Aug. 20. Seniors who are interested in making appointments may call 681-5775.



# More than a job

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**T**oday's young people — both locally and nationally — are often cast in an unfavorable light.

But for every kid with green hair, there is a JaTaryia Hill spending an afternoon with a senior citizen at the Maywood Public Library.

For every youth sporting a pierced body part, there is a Monique Fisher dusting and cleaning an elderly person's home.

And for every gang member hustling on the streets there is a LaSandra Claybrooks cutting grass and doing other yard work at a senior's home.

Hill, Fisher and Claybrooks spent their summer working for senior citizens in Proviso Township as part of a CEDA summer employment program. While the three did get paid for their efforts, they just didn't put their time in and collect their checks.

They went beyond the call of duty, often doing more than was required of them in their five-hour workdays. They cut grass, painted garages, dusted chandeliers and even cleaned ovens.

While they could have done their chores with Walkmans tuned in and seniors tuned out, they didn't. They talked to the seniors, went on trips with them and learned from them.

They turned their summer jobs into learning experiences.

Behind the project — as it seems with so many quality volunteer efforts in the Maywood area — was volunteer extraordinaire Jacqueline Bosby. The summer work program was an idea Bosby had while still community relations director with Maywood.

Bosby, who said she was let go from the position due to politics, still felt obligated to put the program together for local youths and seniors.

None of the girls has a driver's license yet, so

Bosby wound up taking the girls to and from their work assignments, as well as driving the girls and their senior companions to different locations, such as the library, when trips were planned.

And Bosby did it all for free.

For Bosby, her efforts were worth it because of the learning experience it was for the teens and the service it was for the seniors.

"The seniors benefited so much from the program, whether the girls were cleaning or just being companions," Bosby said. "And the kids enjoyed the seniors as much as the seniors enjoyed them."

For the seniors, the girls were a blessing.

"This is such a nice program," said Emma Campbell, one of the seniors who made good use of the program. "Things like this are really needed."

"I went to the store with the girls and they were so helpful. They were really there when I needed them."

Both the seniors and the teens would like the program to continue, but funding is an issue.

For the teens, the best part of the program was not the pay but being needed.

"We took Emma to the store. There's no telling when she would have gotten there otherwise," said Hill. "It's nice to be able to be there for people when they need help."

The next time some green-haired, body-pierced teen gets your attention in the supermarket, watch what you say about today's youth. Hill just might be in the next aisle helping some senior citizen pick out groceries.

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