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Proposals: Greenwood Community and Recreation Center

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Proposed

Greenwood Community and Recreation Center

P.O. Box 416 • 600 Elm St. • Greenwood, MS 38930
601-455-CARE (455-2273)



Mr. Joel Berg
USDA Room 213
14th & Independence
Washington, DC. 20250

February 17, 1994

Dear Mr. Berg:

I am a young man 31 years of age and have devoted the last four years of my life developing a Community and Recreation Center for the underprivileged children of this area.

I gave up a promising career in teaching and coaching, left the Army Reserve, packed by bags and moved back to Mississippi in an effort to "do the right thing" and it got me no where. I was told by the "leaders" of this community that if I moved back home they would do all things necessary to assist with this project. Not so!!

I now feel that I must have been the most naive and gullable person on earth to think that this would have been an easy task. After having gone through all of the "proper" channels, I felt that the Center would be up and in full operation within several months. We did our surveys, need assessments, and just about everything that was needed to be done and still, no cigar!

Being that I could not afford to move again, I continued to work on this project and after about two and one half years, I finally began to get support. To my surprise, a great deal of it came from others in the community.

One company donated and installed \$38,500.00 worth of equipment to what is now known as the Greenwood Community and Recreation Center, Inc., then others followed!

Playing and Learning ... Together

*Joel
should I
pass this on
to Sam or
Leslie?
Linda*

My disappointment is that it took others to come to the aid of this organization, when I know that there are groups in our own community that are capable of assisting us.

At what point in time do we do for ourselves? Maybe no group had the money to fully supply the equipment but we do have carpenters, plumbers and a host of other skilled laborers in our community that could have volunteered and I did ask!

Now, we at the Greenwood Community Center are doing the things that I felt we should have done years ago. We serve hundreds of youths, young adults and seniors through a variety of activities. Even though we still have a long journey ahead of us, we know that we are moving in the right direction.

This goes to show what can be done when one keeps his "eyes on the prize."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Larry Johnson", written over the typed name.

Larry Johnson,
Executive Director
Greenwood Community
and Recreation Center, Inc.

Encl.

A. Description of Agency

The Greenwood Community and Recreation Center Inc., is a non-profit (501-C-3 Status) organization established in 1991, in Greenwood, Ms. It serves the Greenwood and Leflore County area and is committed to the task of providing a wholesome environment with a variety of educational and social activities, which:

- (1) helps the participant to develop a philosophy of self-awareness
- (2) contributes to their development of cooperation and patience, and
- (3) increases their knowledge and skills with matters concerning life.

B. Description of the Project

The purpose of the Greenwood Community and Recreation Center Inc., is to provide a facility with a wholesome environment that promotes the importance of life, discipline and physical fitness for those who are among the increase of drug abuse, violence in the homes and streets, and the many changes of society.

The program accomplishes this by serving young adults, youth and senior citizens through a series of activities which includes: tutoring, aerobics, karate, weight lifting, game rooms, health fairs, group services and other educational related activities that motivates them to become productive citizens in our society.

C. Targeted Group

The G.C.R.C. provides services to:

1. Youth Ages 6 to 18
2. Young Adults
3. Senior Citizens
4. Demonstrate a program that will combat the problems among our youth. (drugs and violence)



LARRY JOHNSON INSTRUCTS TEACHERS AT A WORKSHOP
The teachers will tutor students in an after-school program

After-school tutoring program will target at-risk students

By **DEBBIE INGRAM LONG**
News Editor

Larry Johnson, executive director of the Greenwood Community and Recreation Center, hopes a new after-school tutoring program will make a difference.

"With the types of problems we're having with kids today — kids who go home right after school and their parents are still at work — they can get into trouble," said Johnson.

"They're not going straight home after school. They go to the parks and there's peer pressure and they're forced to do other things."

Keeping kids off the streets and out of trouble is certainly

one goal of the Leflore County School Age Child Care and Education Program. But another goal of the pilot program is to provide extra tutoring for those elementary students who need it.

The new program is a joint effort sponsored by Greenwood Public Schools, the Community and Recreation Center, and the Mississippi Cooperative Extension Service.

"We have 50 children signed up," said Johnson, who is the project director. "It's a replica of a Greenville program which has 177 children at two sites."

"We're starting out with students from the W.C. Williams Elementary School, but we hope to one day be like Greenville's

and have all elementary schools involved."

The Greenville program includes at-risk students in grades one through four. Greenwood will target third- and fourth-graders.

"Our focus is on becoming productive," Johnson said. "We want them to feel successful and go on to be good productive citizens and feel good about themselves."

Parents of selected students can register their children Feb. 18, Feb. 21, Feb. 22, or Feb. 25 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Williams school or the recreation center.

The program begins March 1.

April 30, 1992

Mr. Larry Johnson
Executive Director
Greenwood Community
Recreation Center, Inc.
P. O. Box 416
Greenwood, Ms. 38930

Dear Larry:

It was interesting speaking with you yesterday. We at National Picture & Frame Co. are sending a check for \$1,000. As we discussed, \$250 of this will go to sponsor one basketball team and the balance is to be used at your discretion, but preferably to assist in helping young people financially, by subsidizing their annual dues.

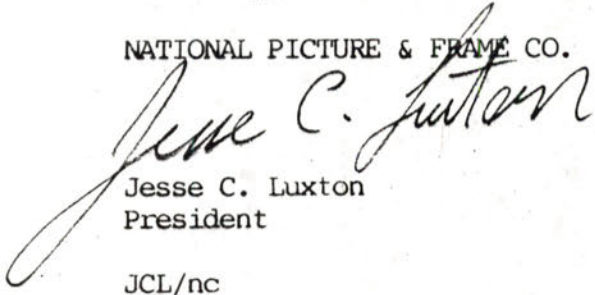
Larry, you are for real and we appreciate what you contribute to this community's youth.

Betty and I will be out to see your operation within the next week or so, and at that time we can discuss some wall decor that might enhance your facility.

Good Luck and God Bless!

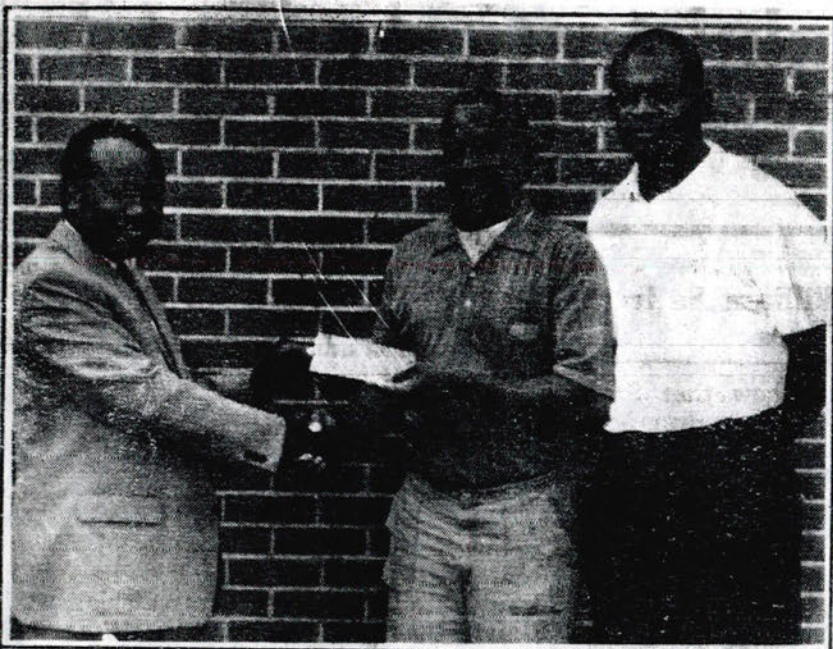
Sincerely,

NATIONAL PICTURE & FRAME CO.


Jesse C. Luxton
President

JCL/nc

Encl.



Church gets grant money

The Rev. Bernard Handy with the Quitman County Development Organization hands a check for \$1,000 to Israel Robinson, chair of deacons at McKinley Chapel Church. Larry "Kite" Johnson with the Greenwood Community and Recreation Center is also pictured. The mini-grant will be used to provide recreation center scholarships to children in six area churches. The children must attend Sunday School and church services, keep grades up and stay out of trouble in order to keep their recreation center memberships. Twenty children will be chosen from each church in the fund-matching program. The Rev. C.H. Fleming is pastor of McKinley Chapel Church.

Radio station donates to center

WKXG Radio donated \$2,600 to the Greenwood Community and Recreation Center. The money was collected from ticket sales to the Miss Heavenbound Express contest held at the LeFlore County Civic Center on March 8. Pictured from left are Virginia Swinney, Miss Heavenbound Express; Larry "Kite" Johnson, recreation center director; Florence Jackson, first alternate; Melody Hawkins, second alternate; Milton Glass, manager of WKXG; and Natasha Polindexter, third alternate. The station is celebrating its 12th year on the air. Glass is the host of the Heavenbound Express morning program on the station.





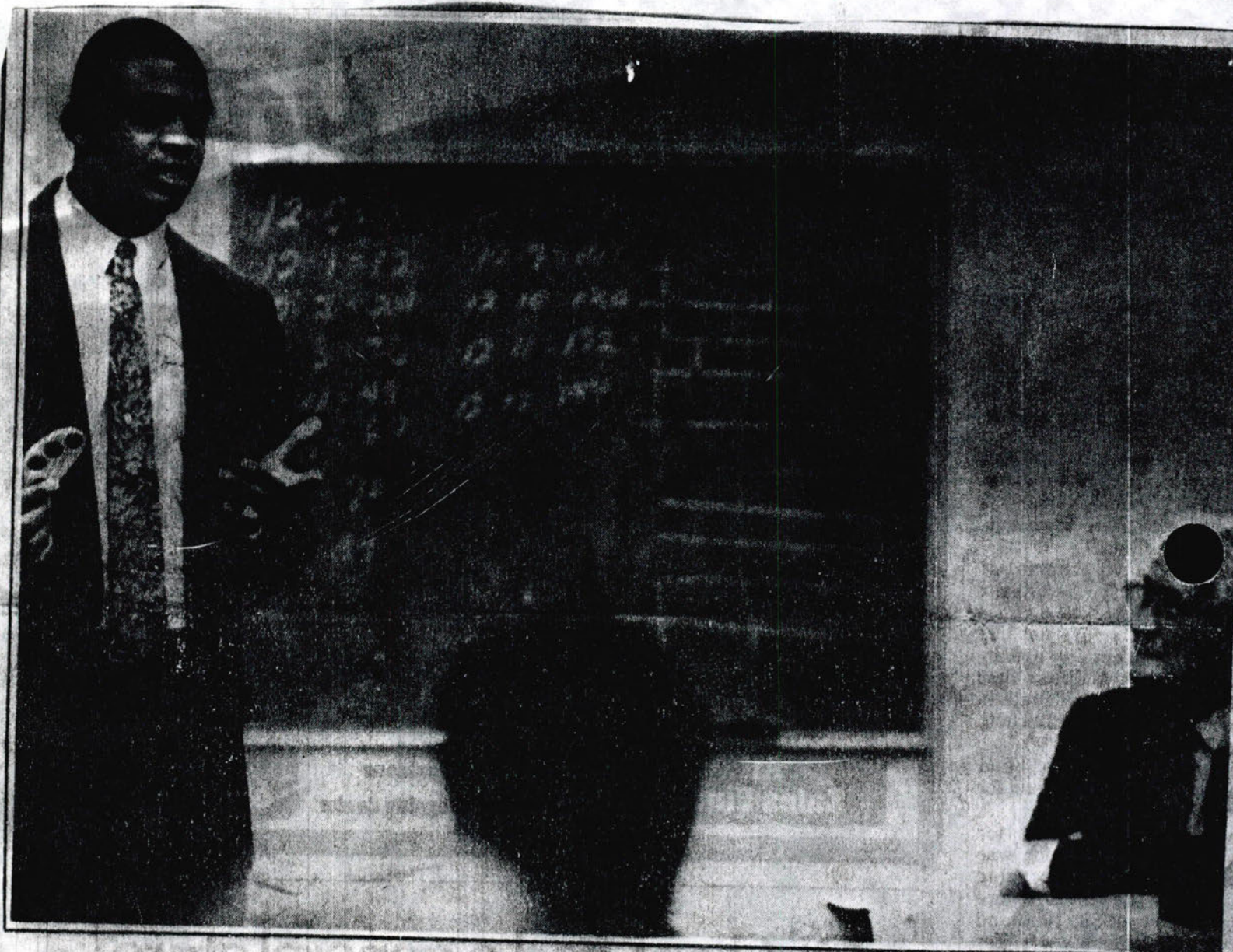
Girls provide special cheer

The Junior Eagles cheerleaders of the Greenwood Community & Recreation Center recently presented Dorothy Spann, 63, third from left, with a gift and two boxes of food for Christmas. The girls raised money to buy food items and asked people to donate goods as well. Pictured are, from left, Jocelyn C. Wright, Kendra C. Frazier, Spann, Lashundra Y. Beck, Arica T. Wright, Courtney C. Frazier, LaKendria Y. Frazier, and Freddie White-Johnson, sponsor. Also joining the group is Councilwoman Arance Williamson, back row, second from right.



Sorority holds Founder's Day

Greenwood-Itta Bena Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Fraternity Inc. and the sorority's Eta Alpha Chapter recently celebrated Founder's Day with a program and service at Wesley United Methodist Church. Larry "Kite" Johnson was presented an award for meritorious community service through his work with the Greenwood Community and Recreation Center. An afternoon program at the Ramada featured speaker Lois J. Gilder, southern regional director, and J. Thigpen of Mississippi University for Women, soloist. Delta Sigma Theta alumnae and guests are, above from left, front, Willie Burham, Jean Hall, Lois Gilder, Leafie Austin, Elsie Jerdine, Iris [unclear]; second row, a friend of Lois Gilder, Alma Henderson and [unclear] Collier; third row, Vernita Woodfork, Rene Blackshire, Yolande [unclear] and [unclear].



Jim Prince

Talking about kids

Larry Johnson, who runs the Community and Recreation Center, primarily a Greenwood youth organization dedicated to keeping kids out of trouble, speaks to a citizens group Tuesday night. He showed the group, Greenwood Taxpayers for Good Government, some weapons he'd collected during the past few

months at the entrance to the center. Among those items was the brass knuckles in his hand. Johnson also told the group how successful the program had become in providing a decent place for youths and adults alike to gather.

Greenwood, Miss., Sunday, November 15, 1992

"The way the living arrangements were set up, there were two different entrances to the

"After the police questioned me and told me they had nothing on me, I left and held a function at the center as planned," he said. "Nothing has changed. For those in the community who have supported me, they will still be there."

low.

Small industries may be interested in the site. But Johnson notes that a recreation center would also be a favorite among many people.

There also has been approval in the community. In a minute naming of a far-fetched eventuality, — the city park department, for example.

"The city is going to have to look at some long-range plans for parks and recreation. In the event there's a major evacuation, there will be a need for more space," Fancher said.

But Johnson thinks that the old armory is large enough to satisfy the needs of several users.