

HR

## ON YOUR BEHALF

The Official Newsletter of the Jefferson County Commission HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

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ATTENTION  
COUNTY EMPLOYEES:

Please remember that the Jefferson County Commission is under a Consent Decree. The decree prohibits discrimination against blacks and females which is also contrary to the County's anti-harassment policy. Please contact your affirmative action officer, Kimberly Webster or Ben Sullen (325-5249), if you have concerns or issues regarding discrimination. You may also review the Consent Decree at your affirmative action officer's office located in the Main Courthouse Annex Rm A630.

*Jefferson County Commission follows all applicable local, state, and federal laws concerning equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, creed, sex, religious beliefs, national origin, age, or disability. Further, Jefferson County Commission will not discriminate based on genetic or family medical history.*

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## BENEFITS - OPEN ENROLLMENT

It's that time again!!! Jefferson County Commission will hold Open Enrollment for plan year 2010-11 **beginning August 28, 2010 through September 10, 2010**. You will receive detailed information about open enrollment and benefits changes distributed by your payroll coordinator.

## What is Open Enrollment?

Open Enrollment is the period of time employers set up to allow employees to choose from benefit plans available to them. Employees have the option to start coverage if they do not have any, change from one plan to another, or drop coverage completely. During open enrollment, changes can be made to benefits coverage without a qualifying event (birth, marriage, divorce, loss of coverage, etc.) .

During the County's Open Enrollment period, you may access options to select benefits by logging onto the Human

Resources (HR) Benefit Election System on the internet at <http://jeffconline.jccal.org/depts/>, or <http://courthouse.jcc.jccal.org>.

When accessing the Benefit Election system via the internet, you must first enter your social security number, then a **PIN number which is the last four digits of your social security number**.

We are pleased to announce that Open Enrollment is now entirely electronic, and will be conducted via the internet. We will **not** distribute benefit packets, nor physically conduct information sessions. Summary plan descriptions for health, vision, dental, voluntary life, voluntary AD&D, and flexible spending can be found on the County's HR website. Go to <http://courthouse.jcc.jccal.org> click on Human Resources Department – Benefits – Open Enrollment FY 2011 where you will find detailed information

about these plans. We encourage you to read the particulars before making your benefit elections.

Should you have questions, need print material, or need help accessing the system to make benefit elections, feel free to contact the HR department at (205) 325-5249, or drop by our office in the Courthouse Annex, Room 610 for assistance.

**Benefits elected during Open Enrollment 2010-11 will be effective October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011.**



## RETIREMENT SEMINAR

## Personnel &amp; Employee Services Division

Human Resources Personnel & Employee Services division will host the first of a series of Retirement Preparation Seminars on September 16, 2010. The seminar will be for County employees within one (1) year of retirement eligibility who did not attend the retirement seminars in 2008. However, if you attended in 2008, are within one year of retirement and will definitely be retiring within the next year, please contact Nakia D. Buckner in Human Resources at 205-325-5249, for a special invitation. The purpose of the seminar is to provide eligible retirees with the information needed to make the process of retiring easier and more enjoyable. We want all employees to be well informed as they make this transition. Topics included in this seminar will be: County Pensions, Social Security Benefits, Sick Leave Conversion, Deferred Compensation, Medicare and Health Insurance options for retirees.

## HEALTH & WELLNESS - Children's Eye Health & Safety Month

It's the beginning of a new school year! To give children a head start to a successful school year, parents need to educate themselves on the importance of healthy eyesight in relation to classroom performance. Since 80 percent of a child's learning is visual, a child's ability to clearly see the blackboard and the words on a page is critical. Prevent Blindness America, the nation's oldest volunteer eye health and safety organization, has declared **August as Children's Eye Health and Safety Awareness month** in an effort to encourage parents to learn about ways they can help protect their child's vision.

Many children do not know they have a problem because they think how they see is how everyone else sees. Unfortunately, some students who are labeled as having a learning disability or behavioral problems may simply have a vision impairment. Since one in four school-age children have some form of vision problem, we need to make children's vision and eye health a priority today, before we begin to see the negative effects," said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness America. "A child should not need to start failing in school before we realize there is a problem."

Prevent Blindness America has recently launched Star Pupils, a program specifically designed to educate parents on what they can do to ensure healthy eyesight for their kids. Parents may simply log on to [starpupils.org](http://starpupils.org) and receive free information on everything from common eye conditions in children to tips on how to protect eyes from injury while playing sports. For more information on children's eye health and safety, amblyopia and other children's vision issues, or to sign up for The Eye Patch Club, please call Prevent Blindness America at 1-800-331-2020 or visit [starpupils.org](http://starpupils.org).

## CONNECT FOUR - COMPLIANCE & TECHNOLOGY

This is the first time in American history that we have had *four* different generations working side-by-side in the workplace. These distinct generations — the Veterans, the Baby Boomers, Gen X and Gen Y — are working together and often colliding as their paths cross. This is most certainly the case for the Jefferson County Commission workforce. Roles today are all over the place and the rules are constantly being rewritten. At work, generational differences can affect everything, including recruiting, building teams, dealing with change, motivating, managing, and maintaining and increasing productivity. Think of how generational differences, relative to how people communicate, might affect misunderstandings, high employee turnover, difficulty in attracting employees and gaining employee commitment. Most people communicate based upon their generational background, so learning how to communicate with the different generations can eliminate many major confrontations and misunderstandings in the workplace.

GENERATION TIMELINE			
1922–1945	1946–1964	1965–1980	1981–2000
Veterans, Silent, Traditionalists	Baby Boomers	Generation X, Gen X, Xers	Generation Y, Gen Y, Millennial, Echo Boomers

Different generations have different personal and lifestyle characteristics as well as different workplace characteristics. Words may even be received differently, so effective leaders should consider spending time learning how team members wish to communicate. Good business is based on understanding others. The majority of us think the correct way, and the only way, is our way. In business, as well as in personal life, that is just not true. To work effectively and efficiently, to increase productivity and quality, one needs to understand generational characteristics and learn how to use them effectively in dealing with each individual.

Reference for this article:

Hammill, Greg. (2005). Mixing and Managing Four Generations of Employees. *FDU Magazine*. Retrieved August 9, 2010, from <http://www.fdu.edu/>

## PERSONNEL & EMPLOYEE SERVICES - DIRECT PAYMENTS

Just a REMINDER - when making direct payments to the Jefferson County Commission for benefits while out on any type of leave, it is very important to provide all information necessary to process your payment.

**Here are a few points to remember when making direct payments:**

- \*Write name legibly (PRINTING is recommended)**
- \*Identify which benefit is being paid and the amount**
- \*Include your Social Security Number (LAST FOUR digits)**
- \*Notate which MONTH you are paying**
- \*Money Orders or Cashier's Checks ONLY made payable to Jefferson County Commission (retain copy for your records)**
- \*Payments for AFLAC should be paid directly to AFLAC**
- \*Pre-Paid Legal payments should be made directly to Pre-Paid Legal**

### *Personnelities....Inside the Personalities of our Personnel*

Ms. Lynn Jones, has made HISTORY as Jefferson County's first female Plant Manager and she is in the Personnelities Spotlight for this month! Ms. Jones has been with Jefferson County for 20 years - all years worked in Environmental Services. She told us that Jefferson County and Environmental Services have been good to her even in troubled times. She enjoys working for the County and enjoys what she does. What does she do? As Plant Manager, Ms. Jones is responsible for managing a 30 million gallon (MG) wastewater treatment facility, and a smaller 0.9 MG plant. Her drainage area covers Centerpoint to Graysville. Ms. Jones makes sure that plants operate within their National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits and meet all Alabama and EPA guidelines. Her work philosophy is simple; she feels that she is placed in position to do a good job. She is thankful for her job and she takes it seriously. She is a very dedicated employee and as Plant Manager she stated that her charge is to get all her employees to pick up the same work ethic.

Ms. Jones was born in Birmingham and she has one son. She enjoys reading and doing crossword puzzles. For fun, Ms. Jones enjoys getting on the floor and playing with her grandson. If she could have dinner with four people past or present, she would choose: Jesus, George Washington Carver, Aretha Franklin and President Obama.

Congratulations on making History and thanks for taking the time to step into the Personnelities Spotlight!!!



**Ms. Lynn Jones  
Plant Manager**

While the HR department attempts to review and monitor the contents of the submissions in the personal sections of its newsletter, the views expressed in the personal sections (which may include Your Voice, Personnelities and HR Corner) are the personal views of County employees and are not necessarily the views of the Jefferson County Commission, the Human Resources Department, its staff or employees. Concerns regarding material in these sections may be addressed to [hrlistens@jccal.org](mailto:hrlistens@jccal.org).

## SAFETY & YOU - BACK TO SCHOOL!!!!

Students will return to school this month. You will probably notice more school buses, cars and children within your communities. Be caution and courteous. Whether your children walk, ride the bus or travel by car to school, teach them how to exercise safe behavior. You can help protect your children from the most frequent kinds of school-related injuries by encouraging your children to follow these practical and proven tips.

### Tips for School Bus Riders

- Do not play in the street while waiting for the bus.
- Carry all loose belongings in a bag or backpack and never reach under the school bus to get anything that has rolled or fallen underneath it.
- Line up facing the bus, not along side it.
- Stay seated at all times keeping heads and arms inside the bus while riding.
- Move immediately onto the sidewalk and out of traffic after getting off the bus.
- Wait for a signal from the bus driver before crossing the street and walk at least 10 steps away from the front of the bus so the driver can see you.

### Tips for Pedestrians or Bike Riders

- Never walk alone - always travel with a buddy.
- Wear reflective or bright colored clothing to increase visibility.
- Respect traffic lights and street signs.
- Always wear a helmet when riding a bicycle.
- Avoid loose fitting clothing that could get caught in bicycle spokes or pedals.

### Tips for Car Drivers and Passengers

- Always wear your seat belt.
- Deliver and pick kids up as close to the school as possible. Never talk to strangers.
- Obey all traffic signals, signs and traffic officers.
- All children under 13 years should ride in the rear seat of vehicles.
- Teen drivers should limit the number of teen passengers to prevent driver distraction.
- Do not allow your teen to drive while eating, drinking, or talking on a cell phone.

### Backpack Safety

- Pack light, a backpack should never weigh more than 10 to 20 percent of the student's body weight
- Organize the pack to make use of all compartments and pack heavier items closest to the center of the back.
- Choose a pack with wide, padded shoulder straps and a padded back.
- Always use both shoulder straps. Slinging a backpack over one shoulder can strain muscles and may increase curvature of the

## HR CORNER

## JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please visit the Personnel Board of Jefferson County's job site at [www.jobsquest.org](http://www.jobsquest.org) to view information on Classified positions.

For more information on Laborer positions, visit the HR Department Recruitment & Workforce Development Division or go to <http://courthouse.jcc.jccal.org> (click on Human Resources Dept. then click on Recruitment & Workforce Development).

Are you ready for some



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