

# The Daily Herald.

Opinion:

Change on East Side: People Helping People

Letter to the Editor

I am a 71-year-old African American female retiree living at [address removed] here in Columbia. My residence is considered the East Side that is riddled with gang and drug abuse. Residents of this area joined together with Maury County Concerned Citizens and formed neighborhood watches, which has certainly improved the climate and atmosphere in this area.

My house sprung a leak two years ago, and I wondered how I was going to be able to get it fixed. I had paid a man \$800 six or seven years ago to fix my roof, and he just added another layer of roofing to three layers already present. I spoke to our councilwoman, Ms. Christa Martin, who directed me to Mike Marks with South Central Tennessee Development District. About that same time my gas furnace started leaking and the gas company warned me of a dangerous situation and cut off all connections to gas.

Mr. Mike Marks handled my application, and he informed me that I qualified for assistance but I needed to pay one-third of the cost. When he asked me if I would be able to do that, I responded that I would pray about it, because I knew God owned everything and supplies the needs of His children.

Two days later Pastor Kenny Anderson called me to say, "We have your one-third balance, don't worry about a thing." People Helping People Together provided the match of funds needed.

So repairmen for roofing and gas heaters came to my home and inspected what could fix the problems. The gas man said, "Your furnace is old and a repair would only last a year. What I recommend is a central heating and cooling system." I never dreamed my little two-bedroom home would have central heating and cooling, but Mr. Marks said it could happen. Praises be to God, People Helping People came to visit, looked around and began making all kinds of improvements. I have a central heating and cooling system, which makes me smile every time I think of it.

Now my home is almost to completion, as St. Peter's Episcopal Church has adopted my home and is adding finishing touches. They gave me a new porch swing, new hand rails on my porch and they are painting and landscaping. The American Legion blessed me with American Flag ceremony.

I know that God works through people. I know He works through People Helping People Together. I am so blessed and realize this and it enables me to Bless others.

A sense of pride is spreading throughout this portion of our community as we see improvements. Crime and gang activity is not as prevalent as before. Neighbors have banded together to partnership with law enforcement to take our communities back.

Neighbors gathered on two occasions to pick up trash as we show pride in our community. Thank God for sending People Helping People Together to play a vital part in revitalizing the east side.