



# Jesup Housing Authority

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Evelyn Jackson  
Lynnah Welch

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DECEMBER 23, 2005**

## **Blizzard Hits JHA Neighborhood**

The Jesup Housing Authority held its third annual Neighborhood Christmas Party Thursday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Dogwood Estates Community Center for all residents of the Authority's neighborhoods, with a surprise snow storm hitting the neighborhood during the event. Actually, the JHA partnered with Adel Ice Company to provide over a foot deep snow on a 60 by 60 foot area for the kids to enjoy during the event. Residents from Pineview and Bayview apartments were transported to the party by a van provided by the House of Worship and Ministries. Over 75 children and their parents arrived at 5:00 pm for the activities, which included: hot chocolate, popcorn, hot dogs, and other refreshments; a showing of "The Polar Express" movie on a eight by eight foot screen outside; and an opportunity to meet Santa. Santa arrived at 5:15 pm in his sleigh with Rudolph pulling the lead to visit with the children. Along with the other activities, the children then had individual photos taken with Santa. Santa also gave all children in attendance a new wrapped gift courtesy of the Wayne County Toys for Tots program, headed up this year by Robert Byrd and Sharon McCrary. The children also took turns riding Santa's sleigh through the Dogwood Estates neighborhood singing Christmas carols for all of the residents. The annual party was a huge success for both the residents and the staff of the Jesup Housing Authority. Mark Watson, Executive Director, had these comments:

*"With the huge amount of kids and adults that showed up for this event, it was a night that we won't soon forget. I really believe the snow was a big-ticket drawer and kids and adults alike had a fabulous time. We had promised our kids a white Christmas this year and one that they would never forget. It was great to see the looks on the children's faces as Santa arrived to greet and hand out presents. Every child under the age of 18 that attended the party was given a new gift from Santa, provided by the Wayne County Toys for Tots program. Words can't express our thanks enough to Robert Byrd and Sharon McCrary for taking the time to organize the toy drive and also to the folks who donated the toys. I promise you that if they could see the looks on the*

*children's faces when they got their presents, it would be a sight they would never forget.. The kids enjoyed the refreshments, movies, and especially the sleigh ride through the neighborhood. When you have events like this one, it makes you realize the opportunities that we all have to have a positive impact on the kids in our community. I really don't know who had more fun, the kids, or the JHA staff in putting the whole event together. The adults in attendance also had a fabulous time with the kids and Santa. The JHA Board of Commissioners are so supportive of us, and that allows us to be able to put on events of this magnitude. They are a great bunch of folks to work with. Events like this also help us to keep in mind the real meaning of Christmas and what the holidays are all about. Director of Resident Services, Vic Drawdy, did a tremendous job of organizing this event for our families. Without the help of the staff, the volunteers, and of course, Santa, this event wouldn't have been the huge success it was. ”*