



# NEWS RELEASE

## LEOTA COURTNEY RECOGNIZED AS LONG-TERM RESIDENT OF RAYMONDVILLE SENIOR HOUSING

Leota Courtney was recognized March 11, 2010 as a long term resident at Raymondville Senior Housing. Ms. Courtney was among the first tenants moving into the complex. She was the youngest of the original tenants and was the only one at that time who came by reason of disability instead of age. She moved into the complex March 5, 1985, making her a 25-year resident.

Tilitha Waicekaskas, Manager of Raymondville Senior Housing, said, "In spite of her disability, Leota has been one of the busiest people I know. She keeps her apartment spotless with no help. Through the years, she has also cleaned the community building most of the time and has done more than her share to keep the complex looking neat. She has always been a good neighbor and has always been there to help anyone who needed her. She tries her best to see each tenant every day, and when she doesn't see them, she checks with the closest neighbor or manager to make sure they are all okay. She is always pleasant and demonstrates her Christianity with her actions more than with words."



From left: Tilitha Waicekaskas, site manager; Courtney; and Sherry Hughes, rural development specialist.

At 85 years of age, Leota has the distinction of being the oldest resident, as well as the one who has resided longest in the apartments. A celebration was held at the community room, with refreshments enjoyed by all, and with plaques presented to her by the Board of Directors and Rural Development. Three of Leota's daughters attended the celebration to honor their mother, with one coming from Springfield. Leota has 5 children, 14 grandchildren, 26 great grandchildren, and 8 great, great grandchildren.

Raymondville Senior was built during 1984, after a non-profit corporation was established to seek federal financial assistance to help those 62 years (or older) or disabled with decent, safe and affordable housing. USDA Rural Development, formerly Farmers Home Administration, provided the financing with a 1% loan with repayment amortized over 50 years.

Janie Dunning, State Director for USDA Rural Development, said, "It is very heartwarming to know this federal program has provided affordable housing for so many deserving senior citizens." Missouri

currently has financing for 732 properties consisting of 17,088 apartments located in each rural county in the state. Nearly one-half of the housing properties were built with the purpose of providing adequate housing for senior citizens and the disabled, as is the case for Raymondville Senior Housing. Dunning added, “Special thanks to the many citizens that volunteer their time as Board Members of nonprofit organizations or fulfill other key roles to assist with obtaining the housing for their rural communities.”

USDA Rural Development’s mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. Further information on these rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or visiting USDA’s web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov.mo/> or by contacting Sherry Hughes, Area Specialist at 6726B South Highway 63, Houston MO 65483 or calling (417) 967-2028, Ext. 3.

**“Committed to the future of rural communities.”**

**“USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.”**

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