

FEATURED

Lighthouse 44 years into helping residents overcome addiction

Tyler Hanes Jun 23, 2018



Executive Director Wayne Dunn, left, and Clinical Director Melanie Campbell stand in front of the new home of The Lighthouse.

[!\[\]\(e3f8612927870f2e0f9f5989e6dd3064_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(a86c7d1c9cb81c81614634a31267440d_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(ce158fc5e55633398941d0898ae45661_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(6f77f2588732dff582d5f470675e762f_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(802fbc25d869d680d37bfef9949fa598_img.jpg\)](#) [!\[\]\(a9acb6dfdb49a3a9fc7e53e5dc6ddf19_img.jpg\)](#)

One of Cullman’s longest-running addiction treatment facilities will soon be moving into a new home.

The Lighthouse, which has been located on Convent Road for the past 40 years, is in the process of moving into a house outside of Cullman near the Duck River.

Executive Director Wayne Dunn said The Lighthouse is state-certified transitional living facility that is mainly for men who have been in treatment before and are returning, or men who have been in short-term treatment.

Residents stay at The Lighthouse for at least 90 days, but sometimes the facility staff or the residents themselves believe they would be better suited to spent more time there, he said.

“Sometimes people need a little more time to get a foundation for recovery,” he said.

Residents of The Lighthouse receive individual counseling as well as group counseling several times a week, and the facility has a van that carries them to work and other meetings such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous.

Some of the residents are homeless as well, so the program gives them a stable environment that they can call home, Dunn said.

“If you just put them back out there, they’re going to relapse,” he said. “We give them the chance to put their life back together so they don’t end up back in jail or worse — in the funeral home.”

The Lighthouse first opened in 1974 in a facility in Cullman, and it soon moved to a house on Convent Road, where it has remained for around 40 years. That property is owned by the City of Cullman, and the city has leased it to The Lighthouse for a minimal amount over that time, Dunn said.

Last year, the city gave notice to The Lighthouse that they would need to find another facility, and after a search around the area, they found the new home for the program near Duck River.

The new 6,000 square foot facility was a private home, but its features make it seem like was tailor-made for a residential treatment facility, Dunn said.

The current facility is around 2,000 square feet, so the new house is three times larger, and its large bedrooms and abundance of space makes it perfect for The Lighthouse, he said.

“God has had His hand in this,” he said. “I can’t imagine anything better suited for our needs than this facility.”

There have been some renovations needed in the house, with the installation of things like hand rails, exit signs and a sprinkler system, and the fire marshall will soon be making his last trip to sign off on the facility.

Once they get the all-clear from the fire marshal, Cullman Area Mental Health will need to come by to make sure everything is up to the standards of a treatment facility and then The Lighthouse will hopefully get the all-clear to move into its new home, Dunn said.

“Hopefully that will happen next week,” he said.

The new facility is no longer in the city, but getting out into nature can be helpful for the treatment process, said Lighthouse Clinical Director Melanie Campbell.

The 21 acres of land gives everyone room to spread out and spend some time outdoors or work on hobbies and just being out in nature can be helpful for recovery, she said.

“The property itself can be very therapeutic,” Campbell said. “There’s plenty of nature, plenty of ways to relax.”

Having more room also means that The Lighthouse can expand from being 12 beds to 15, giving more residents a chance at recovery in the program, she said.

For residents of the facility, the treatment process doesn’t end when the 90 days at The Lighthouse are over, Campbell said.

Addiction recovery is a lifelong process, and many of the current support staff members were former residents of the facility who chose to come back and help others on their path to recovery, she said.

“A lot of good people come back and help,” she said.

One current resident of the facility, who is graduating from the program next week, said he plans on returning and sharing his story with others.

“I definitely want to help people,” he said. “I want to share my experience.”

The resident said his 90 days at The Lighthouse have been a great experience for him.

“It’s basically turned my life around,” he said. “It gave me a chance to find myself and basically gave me a new outlook on life.”

He also said he was very impressed with the new facility, and believes it will be good for other residents.

“This new place is awesome,” he said. “This is going to be a great experience for newcomers.”

Dunn said The Lighthouse averages around 50 admissions per year since he has been involved in the program, and the number of lives affected by the program extends to more than just the residents.

Every success story at The Lighthouse means a man has recovered from his addiction and returned to his community as a productive member of society, but it also means families are back together,

with a husband who is supporting his family or a father who is able to spend time with his children, he said.

“When looking over the 44 years, there are so many people whose lives have been touched by this program,” Dunn said.

0 comments

Sign in

1 person listening

		+ Follow		Post comment as...
--	--	----------	--	--------------------

Newest | Oldest

Cullman Times Events 📅 +

Mon, Sep 10



Bourbon & A Butcher
412 Public House

Thu, Sep 06



Cullman Senior Center Live Band and Karaoke
Cullman, AL

📅

THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE
6	7	8	9	10	11

Tyler Hanes



FORTIS
Your Life. Powered By Learning



HEALTHCARE

Start your career with our Medical Assisting program.
Programs vary by campus.

⏪ ⏩

Get Started