

October 2009

Winchester Housing Community News

Chestnut Grove • Greenwoods Garden • Laurel Commons

Happy Halloween

Enjoy all the “magic” of the holiday!

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From the Desk of the Executive Director

I don't think anyone can say that this Housing Authority is anything but busy. This thought comes to me as I sit before a computer on a Saturday afternoon typing this newsletter. I also think about our tiny staff's daily coffee breaks that inevitably turn into information meetings and end with a list of action items. It doesn't seem HUD will stop its changes. The State is relentless with their demands. New residents (and there have been many this past year), have tons of questions. And emergencies do happen. But first and foremost

A SPECIAL THANK YOU ...

Special thanks is due our tiny staff and professional consultants who keep this Housing Authority humming. This issue is a salute to Lynn Hayes, “Office Manager”, “Administrative Assistant”, “Systems Organizer”, “Operations Manager”, and a slew of other formal titles. In upcoming issues of the newsletter you'll be hearing about the ladies of the Rental Assistance office, and this Housing Authority's professional consultants.

I cannot begin to tell you of the machine gun like speed that phone, fax and computer demands hit Lynn's desk every day.

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From the Desk of the Executive Director

(Continued from Page 1)

Both HUD and the State have strict regimens, which must be followed (to the "T"), when accepting an applicant for our waiting lists.

Detailed information must be reviewed and approved before an applicant is placed on our waiting list. Once accepted, the applicant's information, along with 100+ others on the list must be maintained and changed as required. Then comes the availability of an apartment. After contacting the next qualified applicant some want to tour an apartment before deciding, some don't care; some moved and didn't tell Lynn, others have special requirements. Some change their minds, some just don't reply, they don't bother to call her, or respond to her letters.

Next, comes apartment changeovers. Winchester Housing has been struck with an especially high number of turnovers this year. Painting, repairs and cleaning must all be arranged for. Spare parts must be ordered, and the phone never stops ringing with repair requests, and oh yes . . . a few complaints too. Please don't forget the annual reviews with each resident that must be scheduled and conducted. The typing and filing just gets done, somehow. There are the Police and Ambulance calls, along with alarms that seem to go off almost daily. She dreads the sound of an ambulance. Through all of this she insists on keeping the office door open to welcome our residents and visitors who have more questions (and some complaints). Rents must be collected and recorded, Bank deposits must be correct to the penny. Checks must be written to pay bills. They must also be mailed too. She mustn't run out of stamps either. The checks must be drawn and deposits made to the correct accounts. And oh yes, the Executive Director has minute-by-minute demands for records and other information. Above it all, and even after the most demanding day, she leaves here with a laugh and smile.

Thank you Lynn for making this Housing Authority the best it could be.

Thank you Lynn for making our day!!!

~ Fred Newman,

Parking

Parking always seems to be a problem.

Please be considerate of your neighbors. If you park on the street, please try not to take a homeowner's parking space.



There's no point to being grown up if you can't be childish sometimes

Project Updates

Carriage Maker Place

is going as fast as it can considering the economy, banking changes, and the recent State layoffs. Please be patient, we'll keep you informed. We have over 30 interested applicants in response to our ads in the newspapers.

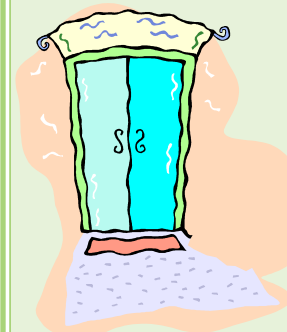
Chestnut Grove Addition

is progressing. We are in negotiations with St. Joseph's Church for additional parking, and Architect has been selected, and the application to HUD has begun.

Small Cities Work all scheduled work (parking, drives, ADA apartments and the expansion of the Community Room at Greenwoods), has been completed. And now, because we completed the work in record time, we've been given an additional funding for sidewalk repairs at Chestnut. These will have been complete by the time you read this.

Chestnut Elevator We continue to await word from Washington if our application has been accepted. Commitments for donations continue to come in from residents and local merchants. I am especially proud of our residents. Besides receiving commitments from a large number of our individuals, we are honored to have received

more than \$300 from Pat Bartlett, through the sale of her belongings, following her passing.



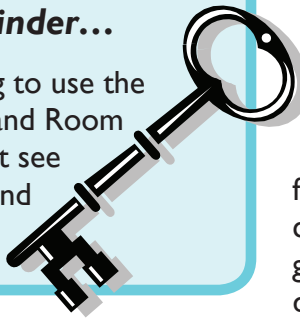
Let's Be Kind, Let's Be Considerate

I'm sure all of you have noticed that the literature rack has been removed from the entrance way and the papers that were placed on it are now being put in your mailbox. This was done in frustration by the staff to keep our entrance way pleasant looking and uncluttered. We are willing to try something different by placing the rack by the snack machines and having the mail person placing the papers and flyers on it there. You can then pick up your papers in that area and please, please remember to take the whole paper and don't leave a mess. We appreciate your cooperation.



Grand Room Use *Just a reminder...*

Anyone wanting to use the Greenwoods Grand Room after hours must see Fay to schedule and to obtain a key.

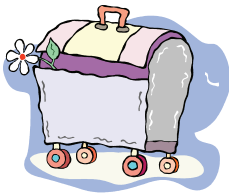


Coordination Of Tenants Services

All our communities have a Resident Services Coordinator. On many occasions festivities and party plans are coordinated. I think that's great, don't you? If any resident has a suggestion for a get together or other party idea please let Fay, Marguerite or Jan know.

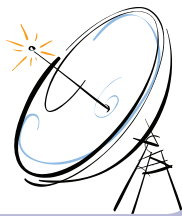
Dumpster Etiquette

Once again we find large cardboard boxes in our dumpsters. Please place them neatly next to, or behind the dumpster. TV's and large furniture items are your responsibility to dispose of. Paper, cans and bottles are certainly well marked for your convenience.



Just To Let You Know

From time to time, I receive a question from a resident concerning dish antennas. The Housing Authority **does not allow dish antennas.**



It's Your Responsibility

Every so often I get a reminder. Visitors to our communities, or someone just passing through causes a problem, or you see something questionable. It's your responsibility to call the Police.

Please, please, do not wait until the next day to tell the office. Time and time again the Chief of Police has told me to pass the word on to all residents of all communities, that if they see something questionable, or have a problem with a neighbor, or just plain suspect something isn't right, that they are to:

**Call 911 for an emergency
- OR -**

**860-379-2721 to report a
suspicion of something**



Never, never has a Police Officer complained to me that they wasted their time responding.

Mirror, Mirror On The Street... Who Can't We See?

In addition, I would like to add that "Chestnut Grove is really getting dressed up...We now have a wide angle mirror at our drive for your safety to view any autos coming up Chestnut Street."



Tenant Services Committees

We welcome our newest Tenant Services Coordinator at Chestnut Grove, **Jan Thayer**. Jan is a former Real Estate agent, and managed Polly's Dream for many years. Currently she is working at Wal-Mart in Torrington. Chestnut Grove residents are happy to have social events back on track. Greenwoods Garden and Laurel Commons are also happy to have their Tenant Services Committee back in action since the completion of their community room. Fay and Marguerite and their committees have picked up right where they left off planning social gatherings prior to construction on the community room. Hats off to our three committees and a big Thank You!!

Fire Safety At Home

Safe practices at home are part of your family's fire protection plan, and it is also critical that your home and family are prepared to react quickly if a fire occurs at home.

- Develop a fire escape plan in your mind that identifies all exits out of every room and hall and an established meeting place outside. Practice makes perfect.
- Be sure all smoke alarms are in working order, never disconnect one because it goes off.
- Be sure your nearest fire extinguisher is in working order and that the pointer is on the fully charged marker.
- Learn how and when to use a fire extinguisher.
- Teach every family member to "Stop, Drop and Roll" if clothes catch fire.
- Know how to extinguish a small pan fire by sliding a lid over the flames.



**The architect of
your destiny is
yourself.**



What To Do In Case Of An Emergency?

First stay calm, be sure you take care of yourself first. Depending on what it is; fire, power outage, call the appropriate agency. **Don't assume someone else called.** With all this freaky weather the WHA tries to be ready for anything.

**If you need help call
911**

The police are there to help. We have emergency generators at Chestnut. Our Community Rooms are open to the general public in case of a city wide emergency.

Why Renters Insurance?

"Doesn't the owner or property management company carry insurance to cover me?" Our community's owner's insurance policy doesn't cover damage to your personal property. Also, our policy doesn't cover you if someone else is injured in your apartment or if someone else's property is damaged in your apartment.

Why do I need insurance if I don't own anything valuable?

Even the smallest apartment can contain personal property worth thousands of dollars. Just think about how much it would cost to replace your belongings. We recommend that you take an inventory of your personal items so you can better understand the level of coverage you may need.



Nobody got hurt, but the fire took everything from this tenant. Please look into tenant's insurance. It is cheaper than you think.



Tenant's Insurance

It's cheap when you think of the alternative. Losing everything you have and starting from scratch is no fun. Fire, water damage, or theft is not the responsibility of the Authority. You should contact your insurance agent, shop for quotes and take the best policy. Don't let someone say I told you so.