Heard it Through the GRAPEVINE

WINTER 2023

POINTS OF INTEREST

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Work Orders

Did you know you can submit a non-emergency work order through KH's website? If you need something fixed in your apartment or see something broken on property, please visit www.keenehousing.org and click "Submit a Work Order" and follow the prompts.

Keene Housing

The Executive Director's Corner

Happy New Year, everyone! I hope you had a wonderful Holiday Season and are enjoying this mild winter weather. Hard to believe we've only had one storm so far and temperatures in the 50s in early January. While this weather's been terrible for the snowmobilers, skiers, and snowshoers, it's made snow removal a breeze (so far). That said, the snow will come again at some point, so please familiarize yourself with Keene Housing's snow removal policies included on page 2 and 3.

Ordinarily things slow down for us on construction-wise this time of year, but this year is different. I'm very glad to report that construction of the new and improved 105 Castle Street is well underway, with hopes of having the new building completed by next fall. We've finished the rehabilitation projects at Damon Court, Water St. and Roxbury Court, ensuring that those properties will continue being high quality, energy efficient homes for Keene families for generations to come. We are thankful to Resilient Buildings Group and Eversource for their contributions to the projects' energy efficiency improvements.

Even when winter is as warm as this one, it's still too easy to stay inside and not do much. Luckily, Karen and Lea are here to make sure that there's lots going on across the properties even in the winter. From lessons on watering your gardens to BINGO and everything in between there's always something going on. Lea and Karen spend a lot of time thinking-up fun things to do! Thanks to the Keene Housing Kids Collaborative, there's no shortage of things for young residents to do during the winter, too. Please check your property bulletin board and our Facebook page for the latest news and events. Have a great winter. See you in the spring!

Snow Removal

AGM is the snow removal contractor for: Bennett Block, Brookbend East, Brookbend West, Ashbrook and Meadow Road, Hampshire House (86 Winter Street), 135 Elm Street, 25 Pine Street, 537-539 West Street, and 45 Damon Court.

Connecticut Valley Yard Works is the contractor for: Forest View and North & Gilsum Street.

Arlen Landscaping is the contractor for: 657 Marlborough Street, 6 School Street, 10 Basset Court, 25 McKinley Circle, 58-62 Dover Street, 309 Water Street, 17-19 Roxbury Court, 71, 73, 75 Cottage Street, and 32 Emerald Street.

Keene Housing Staff will handle snow removal for: Stone Arch Village, Harper Acres, Riverbend, Evergreen, and 218-228 Winchester Street.

Keene Housing's Responsibilities:

- Maintenance/Contractors will plow the parking lots, common areas and the common sidewalks at the end of the snowfall. Generally, you will not have to move your cars before 7 A.M. or after 7 P.M.
- We will clear down to the pavement as soon as possible after a storm. Until that happens you must pay attention and move your car when the plow(s) arrive, so the lots can be completely cleared.
- At most properties when the plow enters the lot the driver will blow the horn. They will NOT knock-on doors.
- We first plow ONLY those areas where NO CARS ARE PARKED. Your vehicle must be moved during plowing to ensure your parking area is open and ready for plowing.
- We will not plow or shovel between or next to cars, and we cannot clear off or move your vehicle(s) for you.
- Maintenance staff will shovel snow and spread salt ONLY on common sidewalks.
- Maintenance staff or contractors will salt and shovel the walkways for all handicapped/ADA units and those with a Reasonable Accommodation only.
- PLEASE do not pull the nose of your car up over the sidewalks, the sidewalk machine cannot get all the snow off if you do.

Tenants' Responsibilities:

- Keene Housing parking permits are required on all vehicles.
- Vehicles with or without permits that are not moved while the plow is on the property or in any way interfere with plowing will be towed without notice by Emerson's Towing (603-357-1028) at the owner's expense.
- You are expected to be aware of the weather and be prepared for storms. This includes having a snow shovel available. You are responsible to shovel snow and salt your own sidewalks,

Snow Removal, Continued

- It is your responsibility to move your vehicle(s) immediately when the plow operator arrives on the property for final clean up. If you are unable to meet this responsibility (such as you are on vacation, out of town, in the hospital, sick) you must make other arrangements (ask a neighbor, friend or relative to clean off and move your car).
- In Keene, sand is available at no charge (lot in front of City Public Works 350 Marlboro Street. You must bring your own container). Keene Housing places salt buckets around the common spaces (FAC or Community rooms, mailbox areas, handicapped walks, bus stops) on all properties for resident use.

Cooperation among residents to get cars moved is appreciated. Keene Housing and our contractors will plow spaces when every car is moved out of the lot (remember, do not move until we are doing final clean up between 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. - not before then).

Residents of the following properties, except for handicapped/ADA units, are responsible for clearing their entry walks/steps and back doors:

- Forest View, North and Gilsum, the Brookbends, Stone Arch Family, 309 Water St., Damon Court, West St., Meadow Road, Riverbend, Evergreen Knoll, Roxbury Court, Cottage St., Winchester St., Elm St., Pine St., Dover St., Marlborough St., School St., Bassett Ct., and McKinley Circle.

Window Reminders

It's that time of year again! Please keep all windows securely closed when temperatures are at or below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. This also applies to hallway windows in buildings. Any open windows in cold weather are considered a maintenance emergency. Either maintenance staff or the Property Manager will respond to an open window by knocking on your door to request that you close the window, or by entering your apartment if no one is home to close the open window. Please keep in mind that a $30.00 fee will be charged. If you have your heat turned down and find that your baseboards are still heating up, please call our office at (603) 352-6161 or visit www.keenehousing.org to place a work order.

Safety Reminders

It is our goal to make sure that you and your neighbors avoid health and safety hazards in apartments and on the property. With safety in mind, please abide by the following rules (this is not an all-inclusive list of possible safety hazards to avoid, these are simply a few examples):

- Please do not disconnect/remove or in any way prevent smoke alarms/detectors from functioning as intended.

Continued on Page 8

HOUSING AND SERVICES NEWS

Resident Self-Reliance (RSR) Program News: Credit Scores

In this quarter's newsletter, we look at your credit score- one of the important factors in your financial well-being. Having a good credit score is not just important for receiving loans (house, car, or personal) but may also impact your insurance rates, ability to rent an apartment, and even employment opportunities.

Your credit history determines your score, and the higher the score, the better any loan terms become. You are entitled to a free credit report once every 12 months from each of the three nationwide credit bureaus. Go to www.AnnualCreditReport.com, and request your reports.

Here is a breakdown of the five major components that make up your credit score.

1. Payment History – Reported payments account for 35% of your total credit score. Late payments will affect your score negatively, so it's important to consistently make payments on time.
2. Credit Utilization – How much of your credit is in use makes up 30% of your score. If you reach the credit limit on your credit cards, it lowers your credit score.
3. Length of Credit History – How long you have been using credit and making payments as well as the amount of time each of your credit accounts have been open is 15% of your total credit score.
4. New Credit – Be cautious when opening new credit accounts, which accounts for 10% of your score.
5. Credit Mix – The remaining 10% of your score relies on the variety of credit accounts you have.

The information above was taken from the FDIC Consumer Newsletter in June 2022. Improving your overall financial well-being is more of a marathon than a sprint, and the sooner you begin, the sooner you will receive results! Reach out to us or bring it up at our regular meetings.

As always, you can reach your RSC by phone or email. To contact Melody, please call 603-283-5452 or email mblanchette@keenehousing.org. Kelly can be reached at 603- 283-5454 or email kgriffin@keenehousing.org.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PHOTO GALLERY

Bennett Block

Stone Arch Village Senior

Central Square Terrace

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS CORNER

A Note From Karen Graveline

Last quarter, Community Connections announced plans for Central Square Terrace (CST) to host our friends at UNH Cooperative Extension for a workshop series focused on Brain Health called "Boost Your Brain and Memory." The evidenced-based program is designed to teach the most promising strategies for keeping your brain healthy as you age. The program uses a unique approach to brain fitness, providing healthy practices that can help you to remember things better, be more organized, pay closer attention, reduce stress and risk of dementia. A small group of CST residents found the series to be very informative and fun. Residents reported learning new ways to support healthy aging and have begun making changes to help support their brain health. We hope to host the series in the future at other properties. A few takeaways to share about what the residents learned about brain health: Dementia is not a normal part of aging. It is a disease, and while common in older adults, does not affect all older adults. Alzheimer's is the most common disease that causes dementia. Genetics is only responsible for about thirty percent of the risk for Alzheimer's, seventy percent is environmental which is why lifestyle is an important factor in brain health. Six areas that affect brain health are physical health, emotional health, intellectual health, nutrition, spiritual activity, and social engagement. Research shows increasing activity in each of these areas gives you the best chance of maintaining your brain health throughout life. Setting short-term and long-term goals in each area helps you get on track to new habits and healthy brain health.

As part of the focus on nutrition, educational workshops, and social engagement, we will be hosting UNH Cooperative Extension Nutrition Connects for a crockpot cooking series in the spring. The four-week series will teach residents to make easy and healthy slow cooker meals on a budget. The Central Square Terrace workshop series will be every Tuesday in March at 1:30PM. The Harper Acres workshop series will be every Monday in March at 1:00PM. The Stone Arch Village Senior workshop series will start the second Wednesday in May at 12:30PM and meet every Wednesday in May thereafter.

Community Connections Office Hours

Need help connecting to resources or help applying for or recertifying benefits? Stop by and see Karen in the Community Connections office.

Harper Acres: Mondays 2:00 - 4:30PM (Mill Building)
Central Square Terrace (CST): Tuesdays 1:00 - 4:30PM
Stone Arch Village Senior (SAVS): Wednesdays 1:30 - 3:30PM
Bennett Block: Thursdays 2:00 - 4:00PM

Keene Housing COMMUNITY GARDENS Plant Grow YUM!

CULTIVATING COMMUNITY

FROM THE GARDEN

Happy New Year from the Community Garden Program! Before you know it, spring will be here, and it will be time to start planting again. It is never too early to start planning your garden, here are a few tips to consider to make the most out of your garden bed.

Favorite plants- There are a lot of choices when it comes to deciding what to plant, it can be overwhelming! Start with a list of things you like to eat or cook with, or even veggies you want to try.

Growing space- Every plant needs a certain amount of room; small plants like carrots only need a few inches in between each plant, whereas big plants like pumpkins may need 3 square feet! Once you have a list of your favorite plants, looking at how much room you have can help you determine what goes in and where.

Companion planting- Planting basil near tomatoes can improve the tomatoes flavor, peas can provide nutrients for eggplants, marigold can keep pests away; there are lots of combinations of plants that thrive when you plant them together! Looking up different ways to companion plants can not only help save space but also help grow healthier plants.

Succession planting- There are some plants that prefer cool springs and some that prefer hot summers. Knowing when to plant certain vegetables can help you get the most out of your garden; when it's time to harvest the cool season plants you can put in your warm season!

Planning a garden can seem like a daunting task, but you don't have to do it by yourself! Lea is available to help plan your garden and will provide support throughout the entire growing season. If you are interested in learning more about gardening at Kene Housing, you can contact Lea at 603-283-5440 or lkablik@keenehousing.org.

LOOKING AHEAD

Gardening Workshop Series

In the spring, there is such a whirlwind of planning, prepping, and planting that learning basic garden skills can be overlooked. Join Lea in a series of workshops to go over basic garden care to get ready for the spring! Dates to be determined, so keep an eye out for flyers and notices.

Garden Activity Kit - Garden sensory Bottles

If we can't garden outside in the winter, we can bring the garden indoors with a garden sensory bottle! For a kit that includes all the supplies you will need and step by step instructions to make a garden sensory bottle, contact Lea at 603-283-5440 or lkablik@keenehousing.org. There are a limited number of kits available, so first come first serve!

Keene Housing Kids Collaborative
WINTER 2023 PROGRAMS

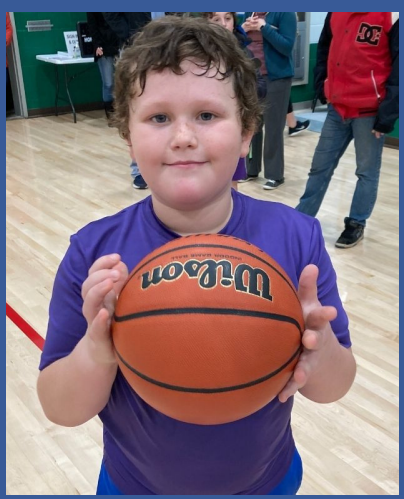
khkc.org/youth-activities

Are you a Keene Housing or Southwestern Community Services Resident?

As a resident of Keene Housing, Housing Choice Voucher Program or SCS (Keene Highlands, CitySide, Swanzey Township and Woodcrest Drive) your child can participate in activities in the community **at no cost to you.** Get started today! **KHKC covers 100% of the tuition fees for all of these programs.** Registration processes vary. When you're ready to signup email Anna at **info@khkc.org.**

603-352-0109 | **KH & SCS Kids Collaborative Family Group** | **5 Harmony Lane, Keene**

Grand Monadnock Youth Choirs - Grades K – 12
MoCo Arts - Dance & Theater Classes 18 months to 18 years
Monadnock Violin Studio - Violin Lessons Ages 6 – 18 years
The Music Kit - Piano, Guitar, Ukulele, Fiddle, and Harmonica Lessons Ages 5 – 18 years
Wakadoodles Art Studio - Art Classes Grades 1 - 8



American School of Gymnastics - Ages 18 months – 18 years
Boy Scouts of America - Grades K – 12
Keene Parks & Recreation - Sport Leagues, Intramurals & Rec Passes Grades 1 - 8
Keene Family YMCA - Youth Classes 18 months - 18 years
Keene ICE - Learn to Skate Ages 6 - 18
Monadnock Brazilian Jiujitsu - Ages 5 – 18 years
Northern Lights Athletics - Ages 3 -18 years
Steve Demasco's Shaolin Studios - Shaolin Kempo, traditional Kung Fu Ages 3 – 18
Swanzey Recreation Department - Seasonal Sport Leagues Ages 4 - 12
The Fieldhouse at Homestead Mills - Intramural Sports Leagues Ages 8 - 18
White Crane Martial Arts - Karate Lessons Ages 7 – 18 years

Beyond the Bell – Monadnock Regional School District afterschool program
Civil Air Patrol - Dreaming about a career in aviation, space or the military Ages 12 - 18 years
Cheshire Career Center - Preschool Program Ages 3 - 5 years
Cheshire Children's Museum - FREE DAY PASSES
Cheshire County 4-H Ages 5 - 17
First Book - FREE eBooks for all grade levels
Imagination Library - FREE BOOKS TO YOUR DOOR EVERY MONTH (Ages 0 – 5 years)
Project KEEP - Keene School District afterschool program
Sophia's Hearth – Joyful Beginnings Playgroups Babies & Toddlers

Join our newsletter and text alerts - email info@khkc.org

PROPERTY NEWS (CONT.)

Continued from Page 3

- Do not leave items on the stove top or in the oven unattended.
- Please do not tamper with thermostats.
- Only appliances approved by KH can be used for heating.
- Do not idle any vehicle on the property for more than 5 minutes (and please do not rev the engine at any time).

The Property Management team hopes you and yours had a very happy holiday season! May 2023 be filled with much happiness and good health for all!

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