Heard it Through the GRAPEVINE

WINTER 2024

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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! I hope everyone is having a wonderful holiday season. It's hard to believe that 2023 is behind us and it is already 2024.

As we prepare for winter, and the inevitable first big snowstorm, I want to remind everyone to check the snow removal procedures at your property. Understanding how we get snow removed, especially the parking lots cleared, is key to maintaining the safety and accessibility of our communities during the winter months. Clear sidewalks and parking lots are not just a convenience, but also make sure that essential services can reach residents when they need them.

Please take a moment to review your property's snow removal procedures before the first storm hits. Your cooperation is crucial, and if you have any questions or need clarification, please check-in with your Property Manager.

Now, let's celebrate some exciting news! Keene Housing has successfully secured all the funding necessary for our first new affordable housing development in a decade—the construction of 30 new units at the Roosevelt School on Washington Street. This achievement is a testament to the dedication and collaboration of our staff, state and federal partners, and the wider Keene community. Many local organizations, community members, and public officials supported our funding and planning applications, and we are forever grateful to everyone for their support.

The construction of these new units is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2024, and should be completed by early 2026. This milestone represents a significant step forward in our efforts to help address our community's historic lack of affordable housing.

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PROPERTY NEWS

Thank You From The Property Management Team

The Property Management team hopes you and yours had a very happy holiday season!

A big thank you to all who are keeping their windows securely closed when the temperature has fallen below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Please keep in mind, any open windows in weather below 40 degrees is considered a maintenance emergency. Maintenance staff or your Property Manager will respond to an open window by knocking on your door to ask you to close the window, or by entering your apartment if no one is home to close the window. Either way, a $30.00 fee will be charged. If you have your heat turned down low and find that your baseboards are still heating up, please place a work order to have this checked out.

Thank you to our residents who make sure their trash bags have been securely placed in the dumpsters. Those who have not, please do so going forward. If a child is taking out the trash, please teach them the proper way to dispose of it.

Thank you to the dog owners who are picking up after their dogs. This is mandatory for all households with dogs. Animal waste must be disposed of in a designated trash receptacle. Households may be fined $30.00 for failing to promptly clean up after their dog.

Safety Reminders

- Parents/guardians, for safety reasons, please supervise your children when they are playing outside your apartment and at the playground.
- No appliances are to be used for heating, including space heaters.
- Please do not idle any vehicle on property for more than 5 minutes, and please do not rev the engine at any time.

Holiday Decoration Reminder

Outdoor holiday decorations are allowed 2 weeks prior to, and 2 weeks after the holiday but cannot be attached to the building. Please check with your Property Manager if you have any questions.

Wishing you all a very Happy New Year! May 2024 be filled with happiness and good health!

PHADA Scholarship Program

The application period for the 2024 Public Housing Authority Directors Association (PHADA) Scholarship Program is now open. Submissions are due to PHADA by January 26, 2024.

In order to encourage academic excellence and community responsibility among high school students, PHADA maintains a scholarship program for graduating seniors who are preparing to enter college.

Every year PHADA awards three scholarships to deserving youth residing in PHADA member agencies like Keene Housing. These include the Stephen J. Bollinger Memorial Scholarship; The Freedom & Civil Rights Scholarship; and the Nan McKay Pathway to Achievement Scholarship.

Scholarship money goes directly to the school that the student will be attending and may be used to pay for tuition, books, and activities directly related to the student's education.

For an informational brochure, please contact Melody Blanchette at mblanchette@keenehousing.org or 603-352-6161 ext. 315 or visit the website directly at www.phada.org/scholarship.

Staffing Announcement - Welcome Back Stefanie Worcester

Keene Housing is excited to announce the rehiring of Stefanie (Stef) Worcester as our new Occupancy Specialist. Stef is a seasoned professional having worked at KH for 17 years prior to her recent return.

Stef has extensive experience in property management and resident services with a keen focus on addressing the needs of applicants seeking housing. Her expertise will shine through in guiding individuals and families through the eligibility process, showcasing a dedicated approach to assisting applicants in securing housing while navigating the complex eligibility criteria. Her commitment to exceptional customer service, coupled with her experience and familiarity with local social service agencies, underscores her holistic support for individuals seeking housing solutions.

HOUSING AND SERVICES NEWS

Resident Self-Reliance (RSR) Program News

Resolutions & Goals - what's the difference? Many people use the approaching New Year as a time to evaluate their financial practices and set goals to do better in the next year. Making these objectives might be a fantastic strategy to attain your goals and position yourself for financial success. The bad news is that almost everyone gives up on their New Year's resolutions before the end of January. The trend is so obvious that January 19th has come to be known as "Quitter's Day."

However, what distinguishes those individuals who are successful in fulfilling their resolutions from other people? Why does it seem like everyone else struggles while they are able to meet their objectives and resolutions?

It's important to distinguish between a resolution and a goal while setting financial objectives.

Financial resolutions examples include:

- Saving more money.
- Paying off debt.
- Investing in your future.

In contrast, consider setting specific, measurable and achievable goals:

- Pay off $1,500 of credit card debt by December 2024.
- Save $1,500 for the family to go to Disney for summer vacation.
- Have $15,000 for a down payment on a House by my birthday.

A sound financial resolution ought to be something you can implement in your daily routine. Consider it a kind of "intentional lifestyle" centered around money, one that enables you to reach your goals!

It's important to set yourself up for success in the New Year. By differentiating between resolutions and goals, you'll be better equipped to make your financial vision a reality.

If you would like help with your financial resolutions and goals, Melody and Kelly are always available to help. To contact Melody, please call 603-313-9389 or email mblanchette@keenehousing.org. Kelly can be reached at 603-283-5454 or email kgriffin@keenehousing.org.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PHOTO GALLERY

Central Square Terrace

Harper Acres

Bennett Block

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS CORNER

A Note From Karen Graveline

Scams, targeting seniors and vulnerable populations, are on the rise again. In 2022, the Federal Bureau of Investigation Internet Crime Center received 88,262 complaints of fraud from people over the age of sixty, resulting in $3.1 billion in losses. This is an 82% increase in losses compared to 2021.

It is important to be vigilant to protect yourself from scammers and beware of common scams the FBI receives complaints about. Government impersonation scams are the most common and result in the highest losses (more than $724 million). Scammers call saying they are from the IRS, Social Security Administration, or Medicare and threaten arrest for unpaid taxes or to cut off benefits if the person does not provide the information they are requesting. Often the scammer demands payments in the form of a prepaid debit card or wire transfer. It is important to know the IRS, Social Security, and Medicare will never contact you by telephone. Lottery scams are when the scammer calls saying a person has won a lottery or a prize and to claim winnings the person must send money or gift cards to cover the taxes and processing fees. Robocall scams are when a person answers the phone and the robocall says "Can you hear me?" and the person answers "yes." The robocall has now recorded your voice and uses this voice signature to authorize unwanted changes on credit or bank accounts.

Scams can happen to anyone and there is nothing to be ashamed of if it happens to you. If you feel you are being scammed, contact the police, report online scams to the Federal Trade Commission, seek additional information and resources from Karen Graveline, Resident Service Coordinator. Karen can be reached at 352-6161 or email kgraveline@keenehousing.org. If you suspect a vulnerable or elderly adult is being scammed, contact Adult Protective Services by calling 271-7014.

Community Connections Calendar:

Harper Acres (Mill Building)

- 1/22, 1/29, 2/5 & 2/26 at 1:00pm - Nutrition Series
- 2/12 at 2:00pm - Craft Group

Central Square Terrace (CST)

- 1/4, 1/11, 1/18, 1/25 & 2/1 at 1:00pm - Nutrition Series
- 1/30 at 10:00am - Craft Group

Stone Arch Village Senior (SAVS)

- 1/31 at 1:30pm - Craft Group

Bennett Block

- 2/1 at 2:00pm - Craft Group

Community Connections Office Hours

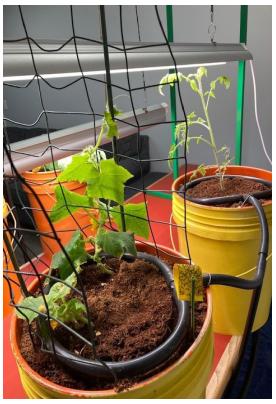
Need help connecting to resources or help applying for or recertifying benefits? Stop by and see Karen in the Community Connections office.

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! While our outdoor gardens are still slumbering the winter away, the hydroponics garden at Bennett Block is thriving! Hydroponic gardening is gardening without soil; the nutrients a plant needs come from the water instead. Bennett Block does not have any suitable space for growing vegetables outdoors, so we have opted to try hydroponics. Hydroponics are not feasible at every location, but here a few logistics to consider.

System - There are several types of hydroponics set ups, what is best depends on what you would like to grow and the space available. Bennett Block wanted to grow big plants like tomatoes, so we opted for a drip system that is suitable for large plants.

Planting Medium - You aren't planting in soil, but the plants still need something to grow in. There are several options like coco coir, clay pellets, rock wool, or even letting the roots grow in open air! Make sure to use the medium recommended for the system you choose.

Nutrients - Normally plants get their nutrients from the soil, but in hydroponics you need to supply them through the water. There are several hydroponic nutrient kits available to purchase, it is important to use fertilizers that are made for hydroponics and follow the mixing instructions.

We grow hydroponic gardens at Bennett Block because they do not have suitable outdoor space for vegetables, but the other Keene Housing properties do! If you are interested in learning more about gardening at Keene Housing, you can contact Lea at 603-283-5440 or lkablik@keenehousing.org.

Looking Ahead

- 3/20 at 5:30PM - Join Christine Parshall from Nutrition Connects for a "Cooking Matters at the Store" workshop at the Forest View FAC. Learn about eating healthy on a budget.
- 3/22 - Please let Lea know if you are interested in gardening in 2024 by March 22nd. Contact Lea at 603-283-5440 or email lkablik@keenehousing.org.

Garden Activity Kit - Kratky Method Lettuce

The Kratky method is the most passive hydroponics method; you place a mason jar in a sunny window and watch it grow! For a kit that includes all the supplies you will need and step by step instructions to grow lettuce via the Kratky method, 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

FREE YOUTH ACTIVITIES Ages 5-18

Participating in youth activities provides kids and teens with the opportunity to thrive. Developing their physical fitness, cognitive abilities, creativity and social emotional skills that can be applied in the classroom and in life. This provides our kids with tools to help them reach their limitless potential and become successful adults.

MoCo Arts: Grades 1st - 12th

Grand Monadnock Youth Choirs: Grades 4-12th

Wakadoodles Art Studio: Grades 1st - 8th

Monadnock Violin Studio: Violin Lessons 5 & up

The Music Kit: Music Lessons for Piano, Fiddle, Guitar 5 & Up

Civil Air Patrol: Age 12 - 18

American School of Gymnastics: Ages 1.5 to 18

Keene Ice: Learn to Skate Ages 3 & UP

Keene Parks & Recreation: Basketball, Esports, & Middle School Passes

Keene Family YMCA: 8 Week Class Sessions Ages: 18m - 18 & Teen Ages: Memberships 13 -18

Monadnock Brazilian Jiujitsu: Ages 4 & UP

Steve DeMasco's Shaolin Studios:: Ages 4 & UP

--------Complete list at KHKC.ORG-------

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER (CONT.)

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We will be applying for funds for an additional 30 units of brand-new housing on the school grounds in 2024. If those efforts are successful, we'll begin construction of those new units in the summer of 2025, with completion sometime in early 2027, bringing a total of 60 new, deeply subsidized affordable units to Keene.

As we navigate the winter season and anticipate breaking ground on the Roosevelt School soon, let's continue working together to make Keene Housing's communities places we are all proud to call home!

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