

HOMEFRONT

Vision: Housing that Works to Enhance Life In Greene County!

Directors Corner

GMHA's non-profit Sensible Shelter has been selected for Housing Assistance Development Program funding to construct Wise Manor Section 3. Wise Manor Section 3 will consist of homes to be sold to families with income no higher than 80% of the area medium income level. Construction should begin in the spring of 2007 with houses ready to be sold by the end of the summer and fall of 2007. Families will need to be able to qualify for a mortgage. If you are interested, then please contact GMHA for an application.

Major changes are occurring in how Public Housing will be funded. HUD is requiring that we move to Project-Based Management and Project-Based Accounting. Funds will flow through the properties. Housing Authorities with less than 250 properties are exempt. GMHA with 361 properties is just a little over the limit. As a result, we are changing from 14 developments to 3 geographical groupings, which include family and senior units. Groupings are 1. Yellow Springs and Cedarville 2. Xenia and Beaver Creek 3. Fairborn. Our Accounting Dept. will produce three financial statements for Public Housing instead of one. These changes will occur April 1, 2007, although HUD doesn't require the change until 2008. Housing Managers may change with the new groupings. Residents will receive notification of their Housing Manager in March 2007. Our goal is to have a smooth transition so that our residents experience few inconveniences.

Recently GMHA went to a new phone system. Public Housing residents and Section 8 participants can now call directly to their Housing Manager. If you don't know the extension, then please listen to the directory. We hope this will make it easier for our customers to get a hold of us. I am not listed in the directory, so to contact me please contact the receptionist.

Our Mission:

To Provide Quality Affordable Housing and Services in an Efficient and Creative Manner.

ATTENTION

**The HOMEFRONT
Newsletter is an official
means of communication
with residents and Section 8
Landlords by GMHA.**

AGENCY WIDE

WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM

Area residents may be eligible to receive FREE upgrades on their home to make it more comfortable and energy efficient through Community Action Partnership's Weatherization Program. Through the program, income-eligible homeowners and renters can receive a home energy inspection, and may receive services including sidewall and attic insulation, furnace upgrades and energy conservation information. To learn more, or to apply for the program, please contact 1-800-617-2673.

WINTER CRISIS PROGRAM

Through Community Action Partnership, your household may be eligible for assistance with utility disconnect notices up to \$175.00 or bulk fuel up to \$450.00. To determine eligibility you must schedule an appointment and bring the following documentation:

1. Income for the last 13 weeks for everyone in the household 18 yrs or age or older
2. Social Security Cards for all household members
3. Current DP&L and Vectren bills or current bulk fuel receipt
4. Disconnect notices
5. If a renter, the landlord's name, address, and phone number.

Walk-ins will be seen 9:00 am to 10:30 am, Monday thru Thursday, on a first come first serve basis.

For more information contact CAP at 376-7747 or 427-3377.

HOLIDAY ASSISTANCE

If you need help this holiday season, please call the person for your community:

Beavercreek

Jarrold Martin at 426-0176

Bellbrook

Susan Lopez at 848-3810

Cedarville

churches

Fairborn

Jennifer Lyman at 878-6061

Jamestown

Debbi Custer at 675-2697

Xenia

Meg Gillis at 376-5555

Yellow Springs

John Grody at 767-7206

WINTER DROP-IN SHELTER

Christ Episcopal Church in Xenia will open a Winter Drop-In Shelter

starting Nov. 1st when temperatures are expected to drop below 30 degrees. The pastor will let the Xenia Police Dept. and the Red Cross Shelter know if it will be open that evening. Level 2 and Level 3 Snow Emergencies will also cause the shelter to open.

- Shelter opens at 8 pm and will accept homeless until 10:30 pm.
- Entrance is the side kitchen door (nearest the library parking lot).
- A light dinner, dry socks, bed and a small breakfast will be provided.
- Staff will be present in shelter throughout the night.
- Departure is 8 am.
- No one will be admitted under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Interested persons may call Christ Episcopal Church in the afternoon in anticipation of need at 372-1594.

PARENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

Parents of students, grades K-12, may sign up for a 7-week course. Sessions are already set for the Fairborn area, and they are working on the schedule for Xenia. The classes, use of a book and childcare are provided free of charge. Classes are open to all residents of Greene County.

For information and registration, call Deanna Todd at 562-5600.

IDA PROGRAM

The Individual Development Account (IDA) program is a savings program that allows a participant to save for a home, business, or post secondary education. In this program, the participant saves between \$25 and \$50 per month and we deposit two times the amount they deposit. If you deposit \$25, we will deposit \$50. If you deposit \$50, we will deposit \$100 per month for up to 5 years. If you deposit the maximum amount of \$50 per month, at the end of 5 years, you will have saved \$3,000 and we will have matched you \$6,000 for a total savings of \$9,000. During this time, we will set up an individualized plan to help you meet your savings goal, including credit repair and debt management. We still have space available: please call Marion Simpson or Paula Pearson for more information.

Hi, my name is Paula Pearson. I am the VISTA IDA Coordinator. I have been with GMHA since July of 2006. What is VISTA? Volunteers In Service To America. I am dedicating 12 months of service as a volunteer to help individuals in our community to save money. Now, that is where

the IDA Program comes into play. IDA's are special matched savings accounts designed to help families and individuals establish a pattern of regular saving and ultimately, purchase a "productive asset".

Now that I have shared with you my position here with GMHA and my role as an Americorps* VISTA, I would like to invite you to join with me in this fabulous IDA savings program. I am looking forward to meeting you, signing you up for our program and watching you become a successful homeowner, entrepreneur, or college or vocational school student.

APPLICATIONS

The Application Department has been extremely busy this year. We have processed 1,269 new applications since April. Last year, for the same time period, we processed 719 applications.

There are currently 1009 Applicants on the Section 8 Waiting List. This time last year, there were 495 Applicants on this waiting list.

There are currently 181 Applicants on our Public Housing (Low Rent) Waiting List. Last year, there were 200 Applicants on this waiting list.

LOW RENT UTILITIES

As you know, winter is quickly approaching. When the temperature drops, we turn up our heat. To help you keep costs down, GMHA will be providing Energy Conservation Workshops. This is a friendly reminder that for most of you living in public housing, the utilities are your responsibility. If you get behind with either Vectren or DP&L, GMHA is notified. We then notify you that you must maintain utilities in your name. If your utilities get disconnected, you would be in violation of your lease with GMHA and may be in jeopardy of losing your housing.

To prevent disconnect, the Community Action Partnership (CAP), can assist you with their Winter Crisis Program. Please be aware that they book up with appointments quickly. (Program described in more detail previously in this newsletter.)

RENT COLLECTION POLICY

Be aware of GMHA's rent collection policy. Rent is due on the first. After the 10th of the month, your rent will be considered late. A \$15 late fee will be assessed to your account. Also, GMHA staff will begin the eviction process and a Notice to Vacate will be issued to anyone who does not pay their rent on time. In the past,

GMHA has given additional days to pay your monthly rent. *Please take notice, this will no longer continue.* Failure to make timely payments will result in termination.

If you are under a repayment agreement with GMHA, you will be required to attend a Money Management session. The Spending Smartly Class is a six-week course offered through the OSU Extension office. Times and dates vary and childcare is provided to accommodate all schedules. After you successfully complete your class you must turn in your completed certificate to your Housing Manager.

Be aware, three late payments within one year may be grounds for eviction.

PET POLICY

Rules for tenant's who have a pet on GMHA property:

- GMHA does not allow pit bulls or any other vicious pet.
- Pet must be registered with GMHA before it comes onto the property and each year at recertification time.
- Pet will not disturb the rights, comfort, safety, and convenience of other tenants.
- Pet must be housebroken.
- Pet owner must clean up defecation immediately and place in a plastic bag to be thrown away in a dumpster.

- Tenant will not permit pet in laundry room, offices, community room, or other dwelling units.
- For dwelling units that open into a common hallway or lobby, the pet must be on a secure leash and be taken directly outside. If the pet has an accident in an elevator or other common area of the building, owner shall immediately clean it up to avoid injury or discomfort to other tenants or staff.
- Pets shall be kept on leash and under tenant's supervision at all times when outside the dwelling.
- Litter box should be changed at least 2 times a week to prevent excessive odor. When disposing of used litter, place in a well secure plastic bag and dispose in dumpster. *Do not flush down a commode!*
- Do not leave a pet unattended for more than 8 consecutive hours at a time.
- Any pet that causes bodily injury to any tenant, guest, or staff member shall be reported immediately to the Greene County Animal Control office.
- If GMHA needs to exterminate for fleas, the resident will be charged a fee for all cost.
- If a pit bull is found on GMHA property, GMHA has the right

to contact Greene County Animal Control to have the pet removed.

Project TOTAL

Project TOTAL (Teaching Our Tenants and Landlords) is a grant-based program at GMHA. It is funded by The Ohio Housing Trust Fund and the Greene County Dept. of Job & Family Services to help reduce homelessness by providing Case Management Services to families who are currently homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless. The program focuses on helping families obtain and maintain permanent housing. Stability is the goal and individuals work toward reducing the risk factors, which may have caused homelessness.

Project TOTAL has over 70 families enrolled currently. The program works collaboratively with many Greene County agencies including the shelters to help individuals deal with the issues, which contributed to homelessness. Workers make weekly home visits to assist families in reaching their goals. A Weekly Peer Group is held for those enrolled and tenants learn how to support one another with encouragement and friendship.

Landlords are provided support in helping high-risk families by monthly landlord meetings. Speakers are invited to share useful

information. Speakers from The Home Weatherization Assistance Program visited recently. Legal Aid, Fair Housing, and the Fairborn and Xenia Water Depts. have visited GMHA to support our landlords interests in learning all about what it takes to be an effective landlord.

Project TOTAL welcomed Sondra Guenther in August as a new part-time Case Manager. Cedarville University has placed a student Intern in the program who will be conducting a Follow-Up Study for prior Project TOTAL tenants to determine whether they have remained housed and able to maintain stability.

Anyone needing assistance or wanting more information can call the Project TOTAL Office directly at GMHA, ext. 1034. Some eligibility is required and will be determined at an Intake appointment. Landlords may also call to discuss a referral for any tenants who may be at risk of eviction.

SECTION 8

MOVE-IN PROCESS UPDATE

Effective immediately Section 8 tenants are required to return the move-in packet within 48 hours of their new unit passing inspection. The packet contents must include the following signed documents:

- Range & Refrigerator Certification

- Move-In Date Agreement
- Two HAP Contracts
- Lease

LANDLORDS

Please continue to place your vacant units on our “Units Available” board in our lobby. It’s a great tool for both landlords and tenants! Make sure you include the community, bedroom size, features, contact person and phone number for the rental. You may call the info into the receptionist or you may fax it to 376-2487.

Landlords will be receiving a form with their checks (please make copies as necessary) in hopes that you will complete them for all of your “open market” rentals. (In other words, rentals that are not being assisted by our program.) We need to gather as much rental information as possible for our yearly rental survey. The information we need includes address, rent amount, utilities included in the rent, bedroom size, type of rental (i.e. house, garden apt, townhouse, etc.), number of bathrooms, appliances provided, and amenities such as air conditioning, garage, newer windows, additional room, fenced yard, patio or porch, washer dryer hook-ups, etc. This rental information greatly helps us build a data base that ultimately assures landlords receive reasonable

amounts for their rentals. We thank you in advance for your assistance! If you have any questions, please call Connie Paoliello, ext. 1026.

SMOKE DETECTORS NOW AN EMERGENCY

Effective November 1st, GMHA is considering a non-working smoke detector as a 24 hour emergency on all inspections. A non-working smoke detector is considered a life threatening violation. If it is not corrected within 24 hours, abatement of the housing assistance payment will begin. Clients will be able to sign a self-certification stating the smoke detector was working within 24-hours if a GMHA inspector is unable to return until after the 24-hour deadline.

GMHA’s suggests that all tenants and landlords make sure smoke detectors are working properly before we conduct any inspection.

STAFF CHANGES

The Section 8 Dept. has had many staff changes in the past few months. Angie Shockley is the Section 8 Supervisor. Zana Wheeler is now a Section 8 Assistant Manager, and Marilyn Bruce is our Section 8 Assistant. We would also like to welcome Connie McPherson as our new Section 8 Clerical Assistant.

HOMEFRONT

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