

GMHA Community News

Geauga Metropolitan Housing Authority,
"Your key to affordable housing in Geauga County."



Welcome to the latest edition of the GMHA newsletter. It is our goal to provide you with information regarding our agency, its' programs and news relating to you! If you have any suggestions on features you would like to see, please call 286-7413, ext. 104; we would love to hear them. We hope you enjoy your new issue of GMHA Community News. ~ Dawn Farrell, Editor

Would you like help creating your future? A Note from the Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinators

As some of you know, the Family Self Sufficiency Program (FSS) is a very successful program. We want to take the time to remind



current and future participants of the benefits of enrolling in this program.

Here's what happened in 2014:

- Graduates: 7
- Average escrow earnings: \$ 6,637.60
- Home Purchases: 4
- Obtained Employment: 9
- Employment from Part-Time to Full-Time: 6
- Maintained employment for 1 year or more: 13
- Post-Secondary Schooling: 6
- Associates Degrees Obtained: 3
- Mental Health Service Referrals: 14
- Job Training Enrolled: 5
- Parenting/Life Skills enrolled: 5
- Transportation services to enable services/employment: 11
- **Overall increase in income: Starting income averaged \$ 4,038 per year and ended with \$ 22,503 for a 457% increase.**

While the Family Self-Sufficiency Program is a work based program, it *doesn't* mean that you MUST be employed full time. It allows for a wide variety of circumstances. The point of this program is to help YOU become self-sufficient. The term "self-sufficient" is defined several

different ways, and means something different to each individual. Our hope is that this program will enable you to live the life you want with as little assistance as possible.

Family Self-Sufficiency can help you overcome the barriers that hinder your ability to accomplish the goals you hope to reach. This is done through the referral of services. Several of the County's best organizations are working together to make sure that every Geauga County resident receives the best possible services. Whether you need help creating a budget, information on getting your GED, or how to set aside some money for a rainy day, there are programs out there to help you prepare for your future.



We encourage you to challenge yourself and join this program. There are too many benefits to pass it up. For more information, please contact Josie or Sarah at the numbers below.

Josie Carey, 440-286-7413, ext. 110 Email:

jcarey@geaugamha.org; or

Sarah Welch, 440-286-7413, ext. 109 Email:

swelch@geaugamha.org. ☼

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Notes from Neva

Fond Farewells



It is with sadness that we inform our residents of the loss of GMHA's Board Vice- Chairman, James Kitchen.

He was first appointed to the GMHA Board in 2003 by the Geauga County Commissioners and served until his passing on August 2, 2015. We were very fortunate to have Mr. Kitchen serve as a member. He was an asset to our organization with his enthusiasm, comments, and suggestions. He will be missed.

This month we also say "good-bye" to two long time employees of GMHA, Pat Fagan and Mel Kirschnick. Between them they have over 58 years of dedicated service to the agency and tenants served in both the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher Programs.

Mel began his career in 1984 with GMHA as a Maintenance worker. In 2000 was promoted to Executive Director and served in that capacity until he retired in 2009. Thankfully he returned to the agency and used his expertise in the role of Modernization Coordinator as he guided projects to completion and handled all the necessary paperwork with ease.

Pat was hired in 1988 as a secretary for the agency, and later she became an administrative assistant for Mel, while also acting as the Public Housing Manager for the single bedroom properties. After she retired in 2008, we were fortunate to have her come back too. Pat returned to the front desk – this time as the Waiting List Specialist. Her knowledge has been very helpful, and she has assisted many individuals and families with their housing needs.

GMHA, its tenants, and employees have benefited greatly from the service of these three individuals. While we extend our deepest sympathies to Mr. Kitchen's family, we wish Pat and Mel a well-deserved, enjoyable retirement. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication.

I hope you all enjoy this summer. There are a lot of great events taking place in Geauga County. Get out and enjoy.

Neva



"There is a whole new kind of life ahead, full of experiences just waiting to happen. Some call it "retirement." I call it bliss."

-Betty Sullivan

GMHA's First Official Family Self-Sufficiency Graduation Ceremony

Last year our FSS Coordinators organized GMHA's first official graduation ceremony. All of the participants who had graduated from the program in the previous twelve months were honored. Each of the six graduates received a Congressional Proclamation from Representative David Joyce and a gift bag from GMHA.

Out of this group, one received her college degree; two completed vocational training, and all significantly increased their earnings while participating in the program.

The planning has begun for this year's ceremony for the eight graduates who completed the Family Self Sufficiency program this year. Four of the graduates purchased their own homes, four completed their college degree, and all but one found employment in their chosen course of study.

It has been exciting to see the continued success of these families, and we look forward to celebrating with them. Watch for more details in our next newsletter.



Pictured from L to R: Neva Rodgers, Josie Carey, Heather Blue, Margo Reda, Joyce Mascio, and Sarah Welch.

As always, if you are ready to write your own FSS success story, please contact Sarah Welch at 440-286-7413, ext. 109, or Josie Carey at ext. 110. ☘



"When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it." ~ Henry Ford

Would you like to receive job listings or information on free to low cost activities?

If you want to get job listings, information on all sorts of activities in the area – including free meals, our newsletters and other up-to-date information, *please give us your email address* and we'll start sending you all the latest updates.

If you would like to sign up, send an email to gmhanews@live.com and your name will be added to the list. ☘

Construction Updates from Mel

The floor tile replacement project for Scranton Woods and Cloverdale Estates was completed this spring. We trust you are enjoying the new floors.

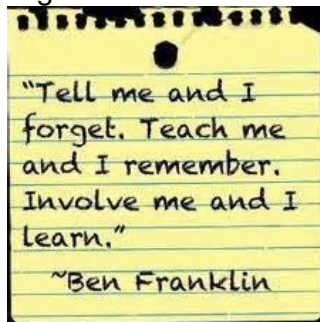
GMHA and its Architect have completed the drawings and specifications for our next project. A contract has been awarded for replacing all interior doors at all of the apartments at Strickland Arms and Cloverdale Estates I and II sites. Work on the project should begin in the near future. Residents at these sites will be kept informed on our progress with this project.

⌘

Free Adult Education Classes!

Ohio Means Jobs with Geauga County Job & Family Services will be **offering Free Adult Education Classes** in Math, Writing, Reading and GED. Preparation Pre-screening required. ORIENTATION WILL BE HELD AT 9:30 AM ON September 2ND and SEPTEMBER 4TH at Geauga County Job & Family Services 12480 Ravenwood Dr., Chardon, OH 44024 CLASSES begin September 9 through December 18th Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00 am to 11:30 am.

For more information contact: Geauga County Job & Family Services Tuesdays through Friday, 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. PHONE: 440-285-1116. ⌘



Important Information from the Better Business Bureau

**Senior Awareness Initiative
Are Pension Advances Right for You?**

If you're retired and trying to make ends meet, you need to be careful if you're getting offers from pension advance services. It might sound tempting to, "Convert your pension checks into hard cash." But these pension advances, loans, or buyouts more often than not come at a high price. Most pension advances require you to sign over some or all your monthly pension checks for five to 10 years. Though you may get a large lump sum payment up front, in the end your return is much less than the amount you signed over.

Veterans and their families are largely targeted by scammers offering free help with pension claims. The scheme involves attorneys,

financial planners, and insurance agents trying to persuade veterans over 65 to make decisions about their pensions without giving them the whole truth about the long-term consequences. Many companies even use patriotic sounding names and logos to convince you to do business with them. Do your research and see if their offer will actually help you in the long run.



The Pension Advance industry is entirely unregulated. Stay informed by asking these questions:

- **Are you eligible?** Depending on the type of pension you have, you may not be able to sign it over.
- **What are the costs?** Be aware of all costs and fees. Not all information may be disclosed in the contract. Make sure to ask about hidden fees such as commission and insurance cost.
- **Do you have to buy life insurance?** Some pension advance companies may require you to buy a life insurance policy naming them as the beneficiary.
- **Are there tax implications?** Getting a lump sum may put you in a higher tax bracket.
- **What is the cancellation policy?** Some pension advance companies might not let you cancel once you've completed the deal. Read the fine print before signing any contract.
- **Is the company reputable?** Check with us first at bbb.org/cleveland or call us at **216.241.7678** to check the business review on the organization.

Before you decide to take an advance against your pension, weigh your options.

- Consider a small loan from your credit union or a small loan company.
- Shop first and compare all available offers.
- Having trouble with bills? Contact your creditors or loan servicer and ask for more time.
- Contact your local, nonprofit consumer credit counseling service. These groups offer credit guidance for little or no cost.

Thank you to the Better Business Bureau Serving Greater Cleveland for this article. ⌘

Friendly Reminders from GMHA's Public Housing Manager – Sonia Whidden

Income Reporting: ALL income has to be reported, whether it is Child Support, Social Security, Wages from a job, Self-Employment, Unemployment, School Loans or OWF from the Department of Human Services. **This includes income from all adult (18 and over) household members.**

HUD has a system in place, called EIV [Enterprise Income Verification System] that can pull some income sources. It is imperative that you report *in writing*, your change in income **within 10 days of the change.**

It is important to us that you understand these policies. If you have any questions, call me at [440-286-7413 Ext. 107](tel:440-286-7413), or contact me by email at swhidden@geaugamha.org. ☞

From Maintenance

The 100% Inspections have been scheduled for the week of October 5th. Additionally Maintenance will be starting Preventative Maintenance checks, which will include furnace, housekeeping, and bed bug inspections.

Please follow previous instructions for tips on preparing for these inspections. If you have any question, please call 440-285-4363.

Any non-emergency work orders should be called in to 440-286-7413, ext. 100. Emergency work orders go to ext. 108. These would be considered:

Broken window or furnace failure when outside temperature is below 40 degrees.

Major water leak which could result in property damage – not a leaky faucet

Natural gas leak – if applicable

Toilet stoppage – single and traditional two bedroom units only

Any situation that may be harmful to a resident or may cause damage if not corrected immediately.

Please use common sense.

If people continue to use the emergency number for non-emergency items, GMHA may have to consider instituting a service charge.

Help Wanted

GMHA has two **part-time** openings with our agency.

Receptionist

Must be able to multi-task in a fast paced environment, have great phone skills, and provide excellent customer service. The ideal candidate will also be proficient with Microsoft Office and have the ability to handle details.

Maintenance Worker

Should have experience in plumbing, electrical, painting, and grounds work. Some janitorial duties included. Must have a valid driver's license.

Resumes or applications accepted until September 11, 2015 by mail, email at gmha042@geaugamha.org, or in person at front desk. GMHA, 385 Center Street, Chardon, OH 44024. No phone calls please. EOE. ☞

Chardon Circle

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

🔑 Please don't put clothing or bedding in the community rooms. They can be taken to local organizations, churches or placed in a commercial donation bin.

🔑 If you want to play BINGO, only residents from your building may play. Visitors and guests are not permitted to participate. ☞

Family Focus

Would you like to save up to 24% on your energy bill?

Yes, it's this story again. For the last three years, the Housing Authority has been letting everyone at the family sites know about a weatherization program available through the Ashtabula Community Action Agency. This program is also available to qualified landlords and tenants in the Section 8/HCV program.





While many of you took advantage of this program and were very pleased with the results, there are still many more of you who did not sign up and are missing out on the savings. We don't understand why; this is a great opportunity for you and it can help reduce expenses for the Housing Authority, too.

As a public housing resident, each of you is eligible to have your units weatherized. Part of the process involves replacing all of your regular light bulbs with compact fluorescent ones, the installation of additional insulation, and water saving fixtures for your bath and kitchen.



This is a win-win situation for you and the Housing Authority. Please contact Ms. DeRien Jackson at ext. 111 to find out more information on how easy it is to apply for the weatherization program. ☞

SEPTEMBER 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 The Great Geauga County Fair begins	4 	5
6	7 Labor Day Last day of the Geauga Fair	8	9 6:00 PM How Do I...? Class and Tech Night Open House: Chardon 6:30 PM Introduction to Genealogy - Middlefield 440-632-1961	10	11 Patriot Day 	12 8 - 9:30 AM (ERP) A <i>Berry Good Bird Walk</i> 9 - 11:30 AM (SCR) <i>Family Fishing Expo</i> Middlefield Library sponsoring adult trip to West Side Market
13	14	15 6 pm: Take a Hike: Playhouse Square. State Theatre Lobby	16	17 6 - 7:30 PM (OP) <i>Hound Hike: Planetary Trail Tour</i>	18	19 6-9 p.m. Middlefield Library-Teen Minecraft
20 1 - 2 PM (OHP) <i>Timbertots: Tree Treasures (Ages 3-5)</i> 2 - 4 PM (OHP) <i>Monarch Discovery Hike</i>	21 International Day of Peace 	22 1 - 2:30PM (OHP) <i>Geauga Walkers</i>	23	24 7 - 10 PM (TWW) <i>Maple Town Tune Traders</i>	25 7 - 9 PM (BW) <i>Kelso Moonlight Canoe</i>	26 Saturday's in the Country 10 -5 on Burton Square 7:30 - 9:30 PM (OHP) <i>Howling with Coyotes!</i>
27 2 - 2:45 PM (TWW) <i>Nature Knowledge: Spiders</i> 3 - 4 PM (TWW) <i>Spider Search</i> 8 PM - 12 AM (OP) <i>Total Lunar Eclipse</i>	28	29	30	31	Check out the Geauga County Libraries for other classes and events. 	

CODE FOR GEAGA PARKS:

- AF..... Affelder House - The West Woods
- BLP..... Bass Lake Preserve
- BLR..... Beartown Lakes Reservation
- BBMP.... Bessie Benner Metzenbaum Park
- BC..... Big Creek Park

- BP.....Walter C. Best Preserve
- BW..... Burton Wetlands
- CP..... Chickagami Park
- ERP..... Eldon Russell Park
- FM..... Frohring Meadows
- HP..... Headwaters Park
- MHT..... The Maple Highlands Trail
- MRS..... Mountain Run Station

- OP..... Observatory Park
- OHP..... Orchard Hills Park
- PP..... Pinebrook Preserve
- SP..... Sunnybrook Preserve
- SCR..... Swine Creek Reservation
- TR..... The Rookery
- TWW..... The West Woods
- UC..... Union Chapel
- WW..... Whitlam Woods

Back to School Easy and Nutricious

We know how important a good breakfast is for kids, but it can be difficult to have healthy, tasty, meal ready on those hectic mornings. Here are a couple easy, and nutritious breakfast ideas. Hope these help take a little stress of the busy days ahead!

To find these and other great recipes, please visit:

<http://m.allrecipes.com>

Slow Cooker Oats



Prep 15 minutes
Cook 6 hours
Ready in 6 hours, 15 minutes

Recipe By: brandysue "I just can't get up in the morning to make my

hubby breakfast before he leaves for work, so I put this in the slow cooker the night before, and breakfast is served! A hearty breakfast that's easy to do."

Ingredients

- 1 cup steel cut oats
- 3 1/2 cups water
- 1 cup peeled and chopped apple
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

Place the steel cut oats, water, apple, raisins, butter, cinnamon, brown sugar, and vanilla extract into a slow cooker, and stir to combine and dissolve the sugar. Cover the cooker, set to Low, and allow to cook 6 to 7 hours (for firm oats) or 8 hours (for softer texture). <http://allrecipes.com/recipe/218929/slow-cooker-oats/print/>

September 24, 2011



Blyn: For the reviewer wondering...Steel-cut oats are whole grain groats (the inner portion of the oat kernel) which have been cut into only two or three pieces by steel rather than

being rolled. They are golden in color and resemble small rice pieces. Steel-cut oats are also known as coarse-cut oats, pinhead oats, or Irish oats...This recipe is delish. ...It makes the whole house smell wonderful, and there is very

little effort or time required from me. My two year old would eat this for every meal of the day if I gave him the option...

Bird's Nest Breakfast Cups

Prep 20 minutes
Cook 30 minutes
Ready in 50 minutes

Recipe By: EPHESIS "I got the basics of this recipe from a friend of mine and thought it was a great idea since these little nests can be made ahead, which I love. They are delicious, easy to make, and can be customized to your own tastes. I ... use the recipe as a delicious grab-and-go breakfast..."



Ingredients

- 1 (30 ounce) package frozen shredded hash brown potatoes, thawed
- 2 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2/3 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- 12 eggs
- 2 tablespoons water
- 8 slices cooked bacon, crumbled - divided
- 1/4 cup shredded Cheddar cheese, divided

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C). Grease 24 muffin cups.
2. Mix hash brown potatoes, salt, black pepper, olive oil, and 2/3 cup shredded Cheddar cheese in a bowl. Divide mixture between prepared muffin cups and use your fingers to shape potato mixture into nests with hollows in the middle.
3. Bake in the preheated oven until hash browns are browned on the edges and cheese has melted, 15 to 18 minutes. Remove hash brown nests.
4. Reduce oven temperature to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
5. Whisk eggs and water in a bowl until thoroughly combined; season with salt and black pepper. Pour equal amount of egg mixture into each nest; sprinkle with bacon crumbles and 1 teaspoon Cheddar cheese.
6. Bake in the oven until eggs are set, 13 to 16 minutes. Let cool in pans and remove by sliding a knife between potato crust and muffin cup. ☘

Board Opening

As Neva mentioned earlier, and as many of you are aware, Jim Kitchen, a long-time Board member and a resident of GMHA, passed away last month. As a tenant he brought a valued perspective to the Board. He could make you laugh, and he was also a thoughtful person when working with fellow Board members or tenants.

Jim’s passing creates an opening on GMHA’s Board for another tenant to fill this position. If you are interested in serving on GMHA’s Board of Directors, please complete the form below.

Prospective Board Member Questionnaire

Your contact information: _____

First Name

Last Name

Phone Number

Address

Summary of work experience: _____

Educational Background: _____

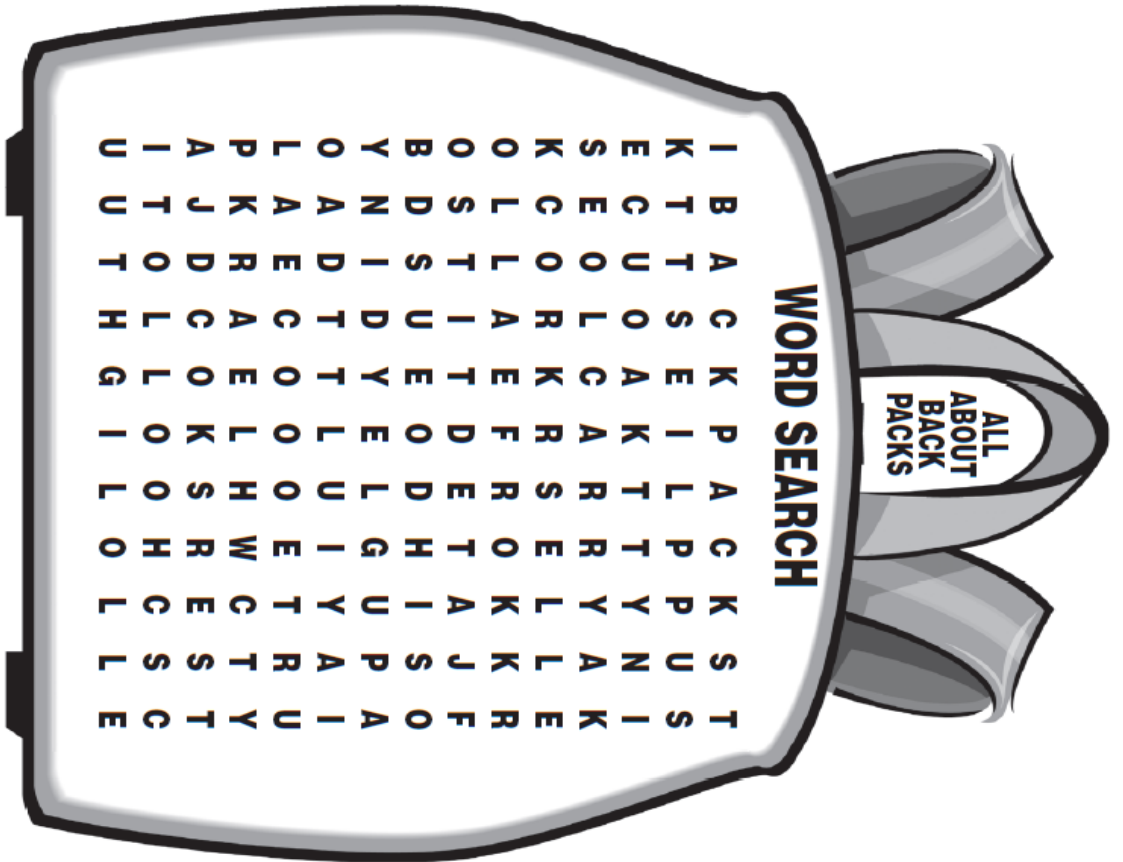
Why do you wish to serve on the Board of Directors of the Geauga Metropolitan Housing Authority?

What expertise/skills would you bring to the Board?

Describe any other community group(s) or organization(s) in which you have participated. Please describe your role in each. _____

Do you have any knowledge, experience or direct involvement with organizations involved in housing issues? _____

In order to fairly evaluate all interested parties, please complete this questionnaire and return it to the attention of Ms. Lynn Buescher. You may use one of the drop boxes, mail, fax, or email the completed form. Mail: 385 Center Street, Chardon, Ohio 44024; Fax: 440-286-7496, Email: lbuescher@geaugamha.org. In order to be considered for this position, all questionnaires must be received by noon on Friday, September 18, 2015.



See how many of these newspaper related words you can find in the puzzle. The words can be forward, backward or diagonal.

Created by Sara Lintner
Grand Forks Herald 2015

- 1. BACKPACK
- 2. LIGHT
- 3. PADDED
- 4. STRAPS
- 5. WEIGHT
- 6. SCHOOL
- 7. CORE
- 8. SHOULDERS
- 9. BOOKS
- 10. SUPPLIES
- 11. CARRY
- 12. LOAD



385 Center Street
Chardon, OH 44024