

RHA Update



From the Desk of the Executive Director

by Kevin Loso

Hickory Street FREE WIFI HOTSPOT



The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for access to high-speed internet connections for healthcare, education, remote work and government services. So the Rutland Housing Authority has partnered with the Department of Public Service to install a free outdoor Wifi hotspot in front of the Hickory Street Community Room. No Password needed. It is open to Hickory Street residents and the public.

Just a lil' RENT REMINDER

January rent is due no later than Thursday, January 8th. A 5% late fee will be added to any payments made after this date. If you are not able to pay your rent on time, please call to make payment arrangements:

Julie - 775-2926 ext. 14
Barbara - 775-2926 ext. 19

With the Holidays behind us and a new year underway I am reminded of the critical role that our SASH staff plays in helping to keep our elderly and disabled neighbors safe at home. SASH is a caring partnership that coordinates the resources of social service agencies, community health providers and non profit housing organizations to support residents and members of the community who choose to live independently at home. Individualized, on-site support is provided by one of our dedicated team of SASH coordinators and SASH Wellness Nurses. If you are not yet a SASH participant and think you might benefit from these vital services contact Carol Keefe, Resident Services Program Manager at Ckeefe@rhavt.org or 775-2926 ext. 16

SASH Serves older adults as well as people with special needs who receive Medicare support. SASH touches the lives of approximately 500 people throughout Rutland County.

Benefits to SASH Participants include:

- Improved quality of life
- Comprehensive health & wellness assessments

- Individualized Healthy Living Plans
- Money savings through preventative health care
- Regular check-ins by caring staff
- Health coaching and access to wellness nurses
- Help in planning for successful transitions(e.g., following hospitalizations, navigating long-term care options and during a crisis access to prevention and wellness programs
- Support in self-managing medications

As I sit at my desk writing this article the snow is falling outside at depths we have not seen in some time. The weatherman is saying that we might see as much as two feet. Could someone remind me why we live in Vermont in the winter? Actually, despite the snow and cold there's no place more beautiful.

As you know, winters in Vermont can be a real challenge for all of us and with a small team of dedicated maintenance staff it is challenging to keep up with the sidewalks, parking lots

Continued

and driveways during heavy accumulations. Please be patient and know that they are working as quickly as possible. Despite their best efforts ice and snow can make for potentially treacherous walking conditions. Please use extra care to avoid falls. In the event that you do take a tumble, if at all possible, do not attempt to get up until emergency personnel arrives to assist you.

Finally, I wish to thank all of you who have been following the Health Department guidelines during the coronavirus pandemic. We are closely monitoring the role out of the vaccines and will work with local healthcare leaders to gain access for our residents just as soon as possible. In the meantime, please continue to do all you can to keep you and your neighbors safe.

Here's to a happier and healthier New Year

Many Thanks,
Kevin Loso,
Executive Director



Housing for the Homeless Opens in Rutland

The Rutland Housing Authority welcomed six families to the new Rutland Area Bridge Housing project at 101 U.S. Route 4 East on December 22nd just days before the Christmas holiday. "Bridge" Housing was funded using monies received under the CARES Act through the Vermont Housing Conservation Board. It was designed for individuals and families that have faced homelessness either prior to or as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Many of these families have spent the last several months in motels and have been faced with having little space, no kitchens and an environment that has been nearly impossible in which to support their children's remote learning.

The program is sponsored by Housing Initiatives Inc and Rutland Housing Authority with generous support from Rutland Regional Medical Center, Vermont Low Income Trust for Electricity (VLITE) and a long list of community donors. The project will serve as transitional housing designed to move participants into permanently affordable housing through supportive services and case management. There are a total of 9 units including one for an on-site manager. Two of the units are being reserved by RRMC to provide housing to patients that are ready to leave the hospital but who are homeless. Referrals to Rutland Area Bridge Housing can be made by contacting the RHA at 775-2926.



Scholarship Opportunity

Public Housing Authority Directors Association (PHADA) Scholarship is Now Open

Since 1985, the Public Housing Authority Directors Association has recognized and rewarded academic excellence in public and assisted housing through its scholarship program. In 2021, PHADA will proudly award three scholarships to deserving high school seniors residing in public and assisted housing. You can access the materias on the PHADA website at www.phada.org/conferences-education/phada-scholarship-program

Submissions are due to PHADA by January 29th, 2021. Please contact Carol Keefe at 775-2926 ext. 16 to make us aware that you are applying. We will work with you if you require any assistance.

***SASH in the Year of COVID – 19
Resident Services Program Manager,
Carol Keefe***

SASH in 2020 is best summed up by a SASH Coordinator at Cathedral Square's Thayer House in Burlington...

I don't think it is an overstatement to say that SASH staff have saved lives during this pandemic. Cathedral Square was quick to recognize and react to an emerging threat to our residents. The guidance varied as new information was discovered or handed down from the State Health Department. SASH staff were "boots on the ground" to relay the information.

Rutland Housing Authority staff have come in every day since March; putting up signs and giving information in mailboxes, taking calls, easing tensions, listening to and trying to mitigate the extreme anxiety of residents, refereeing arguments between tenants, sourcing food and meds for those who needed it, assisting with technology from rebooting cell phones to helping access telehealth, fielding calls from concerned family members who live afar, relaying vital information and paperwork between tenants and other agencies who were not able to come onsite, and collaborating with maintenance, housekeeping and SASH colleagues as we were all short tempered and stretched thin.

Diplomacy, understanding, listening, disinfecting, distracting with humor and music, coercing and cajoling residents into acting safely and taking care of themselves all while modeling best practices of mask wearing, hand washing, and social distancing are just some of what SASH did during this time.

Every skill I have ever mastered and deployed came into play over the past 6 months, from comforting family members who had lost loved ones that they had been unable to see for a while to delivering meals door to door. Rutland Housing Authority has been COVID free. Not bragging, for it may come, but at the height of the uncertainty and anxiety, we kept people safe and relatively sane. We are in it for the long haul.

It is important to recognize the role of SASH staff especially during this pandemic. We are very fortunate to have a caring, compassionate and dedicated SASH team not only in our housing sites but in Rutland County.

A year ago I celebrated the New Year in Japan. An experience I will never forget. Hiking Mount Takao (considered a sacred Mountain) to the temple to pray for good fortune. Continuing to the summit in hopes to catch a view of Mt. Fuji. At the top I sat devouring Soba noodles admiring the beautiful view of Tokyo. Just one of my many experiences during my visit and one of many traditions I experienced for the New Year. Below is a picture of a long lost tradition that I was fortunate to take part in during my visit. If you can guess give me a call and I will put your name in a hat to win a little prize! 775-2926 ext. 16



**It's that time of year again!
Rent Recertifications**

Templewood Court Tenants

By now you should have received your rent recertification packets. If you have not, or you have questions about next steps, please call Barbara at 775-2926 ext. 19. Paperwork is due back by January 15th.

Sheldon Towers

You will receive your packets by mid-January. Paperwork is due back by February 12th.

Property Management Reminders

*by Julie Sanderson, Property Manager
Barbara Richardson, Assistant Property Manager*



Winter is here! The weather has been swinging through extremes! Please use caution if you're out and about when conditions are snowy or icy.

Maintenance Reminders

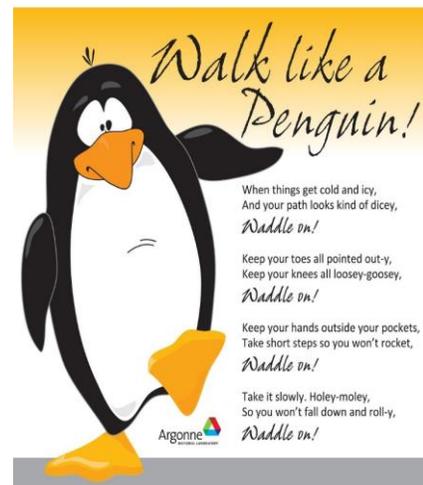
By Jon Jordon, Maintenance Supervisor



We continue to operate under COVID-19 restrictions that have an impact on maintenance processes.

Work Orders – Please remember that currently, maintenance staff will only enter your unit to address urgent/emergency work orders, such as clogged drains, faulty carbon monoxide/smoke detectors and electrical problems. If staff do enter your apartment while you're there, please wear a mask and keep at least 6 feet apart from them.

Please Keep Your Distance – If you see maintenance staff members on the properties, please do not approach them - for everyone's protection. If you have questions or need to report a work order, please call the office.



Sheldon Towers

Renovations Reminder

Please continue to use the spring water provided on each floor for drinking and cooking until the renovation project is completed in the spring. We will send a notice directly to tenants when tap water is again suitable for consumption.



This Month's Recipe:

Pumpkin Cornbread

from Kirsten Hathaway, Director of
Finance & HR



- 1 cup Flour
- 1 Tablespoon Baking Powder
- 1 teaspoon Kosher Salt
- ½ teaspoons Ground Cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoons Ground Nutmeg
- ½ cups Brown Sugar
- 1 cup Cornmeal
- 2 whole Eggs
- 1 cup Pumpkin Puree
- ¼ cups Olive Oil
- 1 Tablespoon Molasses

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F and grease an 8×8” baking dish.
In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt, spices, brown sugar, and cornmeal.
In a small bowl, lightly beat the eggs, and then stir in the pumpkin, oil, and molasses.
Stir the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients just until combined, and then pour the batter into the pan, smoothing out the top as much as possible. Bake 30 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Serve warm.

WORDSEARCH: WINTER WONDERLAND

Find these words:

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| BLIZZARD | MITTENS | SLEIGHRIDE |
| EARMUFFS | NUTCRACKER | SNOW |
| FIREPLACE | QUILT | SNOWFLAKES |
| HAT | SCARF | WINTER |
| ICICLES | SKATING | WONDERLAND |
| JACKFROST | SKIING | |

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Quote for the new year

“You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream” C.S. Lewis

It is with great sadness that we acknowledge the passing of 2 long-time Rutland Housing Authority residents.



Sheldon Towers resident Maude Ainsworth. A resident for 30 years! Maude passed away December 1st, 2020 at the age of 84. As a resident of Shedon Towers, Maude was an institution and friend to all.



Templewood Court Resident Jean Wade. A resident of Templewood Court for 18 years. Jean passed away on December 14th at the age of 79. Jean will be missed by all.