

- - OUR CORNER - -

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF AMERICUS NEWSLETTER

"Building Bridges For Better Communication"

April 2010

AMERICUS HOUSING AUTHORITY SPONSORS *EMPLOYMENT READINESS and PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING*



(Keith Swiney of Motivation, Inc. conducts training session)

The Americus Housing Authority recently offered Employment Readiness and Personal Development Training to its residents. The training was held on the campus of South Georgia Technical College the week of January 11th thru January 15th from 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 pm each day. Keith Swiney of Motivational, Inc., (a Real Estate Consulting Company) presided over the week long training session. Certificates of completion were provided to each resident completing the entire 5-day workshop.

The Housing Authority offered this class as part of its commitment to resident education in line with the HUD Section 3 Regulation. The purpose of Section 3 is ensure that employment and other economic business opportunities generated by HUD Financial Assistance shall be directed to low and very low income persons, particularly those who are recipients of government housing assistance.



**FROM THE DESK OF
GEORGE EDGE
(Manager of Housing)**

In the last edition of our newsletter, I addressed the concern that some of our residents are choosing to ignore the Community Service Requirement. This is not something that our authority has any control over, but this requirement is mandated by HUD Federal Register Notice (24 CFR 960.600). It requires each adult resident of public housing to contribute 8 hours per month of community service or participate in an economic self-sufficiency program.

The Housing Authority of Americus' policy does not allow individuals to skip a month and then double up the following month unless special circumstances warrant it. What this means is that you will not be allowed to make up community service hours at the time of your annual re-examination. You **MUST** perform 8 hours each month in order to be continually eligible for public housing.

The following individuals are exempt: age 62 years or older, blind or disabled, a primary caretaker of an individual, and persons engaged in work activities. If a resident fails to complete this requirement, the Housing Authority is not permitted to renew the family lease at the time of their re-examination.

I also want to thank our residents who have been consistently using the Citizens Bank of Americus as the location to make your monthly rental payment. We are also most appreciative to Citizens Bank for processing these payments. We ask that you continue to present your monthly tenant statement to the tellers, and please be advised that the only amount they will accept is the full amount on the statement. If you desire to pay a different amount, you need to pay at our office located at 825 N Mayo Street.

Lastly, we have been receiving several reports about residents having dogs. Pets must be registered with the Housing Authority *before* they are brought onto the premises. Registration includes documentation signed by a licensed veterinarian that the pet has received all required inoculations. You are also required to pay a Pet Deposit which consists of the greater of your Total Rent Payment or \$100. This amount must be paid in full *before* the pet is placed on the premises. This registration must be renewed annually and will be coordinated with your annual re-examination date. The following animals are not permitted:

- Any animal whose adult weight will exceed 20 pounds.
- Dogs of the pitt bull, rottweiler, chow, or boxer breeds.
- Ferrets or other animals whose natural protective mechanism poses a risk to small children of serious bites or lacerations.

Violation of this policy will constitute termination of your dwelling lease.

Thanks for your continued support. If you have any questions, I may be contacted at (229) 924-3386, Ext. 214.



(Master & Egypt Roberts)

Pitt bulls ARE NOT ALLOWED to be kept as pets on Housing Authority property.



Don't Bring Bed Bugs Home

Beware of bed bugs when you travel! These 10 steps can help reduce the risk of hungry hitch hikers:

*When checking into a hotel, inspect your room thoroughly for bed bugs. Make sure you look closely for them (or their signs such as blood spots) in or behind the headboard of the bed, on or behind the picture hanging above the bed board, or in the seams of the mattress or box springs. (Bed bugs feed upon human blood at night and leave obvious stains behind).

*Inspect the valet stand or luggage rack thoroughly around the fabric seams. Afterwards, place your suitcase on the stand and keep it there the entire visit; don't let it sit on the floor, bed sofa or any other furniture in the room.

*Check the hangers and racks in the closet before hanging your clothes on them.

*Move your bed away from the wall of the room, and do not let linens touch the floor.

*Check nightstands and dresser drawers before placing personal items on or in them.

*If you should find bed bugs present, alert the hotel management immediately and ask that you be moved to another room.

*While waiting for transportation to the airport, check the upholstery of the lobby seats for signs of bed bugs.

*When on your plane or train headed home, check the seat and pillows or blankets handed to you for signs of bed bugs.

*When you return home, unload your suitcase in the garage or out on the patio. Make sure you inspect your luggage thoroughly both inside and out.

*If you find that you have brought any bed bugs home with you, please contact an exterminating service immediately. Early detection is the key – infestations are much easier to tackle at the early end, before things get out of hand.



SCHOOLS WILL SOON BE OUT!!!

LET'S MAKE SAFE PLANS FOR OUR CHILDREN NOW!!



**FROM THE DESK OF
GARY WOODS
(Manager of Technical Services)**

Hello again from the Maintenance Department. I hope you all are as glad as we are to see the arrival of spring. We have all just survived the coldest winter in 25 years with an accumulation of **SNOW** in Americus, Georgia!!!

Soon we will begin using air conditioning to control the indoor temperature. I would like to offer a few tips to try to keep your electric cost as reasonable as possible.

1. Keep your thermostat set at 78 degrees or higher.
2. Keep doors and windows closed.
3. Keep blinds and curtains closed on the "sun" side of the apartment.
4. The Housing Authority will change the air conditioning filter monthly at no charge.
5. In order to keep the filter clean, avoid dry sweeping the floor.
6. Keep a mat outside and inside your entrance doors to reduce the amount of dirt, dust, and pollen that gets tracked into the house.
7. On cool days and evenings, open windows and doors and turn off the air conditioning.

The lawn maintenance contractors have begun their task of maintaining the lawns in all areas of the Housing Authority. Please try to keep toys, bicycles, chairs, and debris off of the grass areas when the contractors are cutting. I realize that the grass in some areas was pretty tall at the beginning of the cutting season but the grass will be cut on a regular basis until late October. We have had a problem with vehicles being parked on the grass this past winter which is a violation of your lease. There are fines involved for this violation and continued parking on the grass could lead to eviction. So, please do not park in any area that is not designated for parking.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the residents again for your cooperation in maintaining the various areas with respect to cleanliness inside and outside the apartments. We still have some areas with problems, but for the most part the developments are better kept. Also, thank you for your understanding of the emergency call system which was explained in the last edition of our newsletter. The number of calls has gone down over the past several months which is an indication of your cooperation.

I am "out and about" during the work day trying to visit each development at least once each day. Now that it is summer, I look forward to meeting as many residents as I can. So, when you see me riding by, come out and say hello.



SUMMER SAVINGS

Reduce your overall energy consumption by up to 15% per month. Adjust the thermostat in your home this summer to 78 degrees.

TXT = ACCDNT

Sending messages behind the wheel is deadlier than drinking and driving.



23x That's how many times more likely a texting driver is to be involved in a crash than one who is not texting.

5,870 people killed by distracted drivers in the US in 2009. They injured 515,000 others.

4.6 seconds The average time texting drivers have their eyes off the road to send or read a text. At 55 mph, that's long enough to travel the length of a football field.

.08 Using your cell phone while driving? Your reaction time is the same as having a blood alcohol level of .08, the legal limit in the United States.

88% The percentage of all adults who think using a cell phone while driving is dangerous. Yet, 72% of adult cell phone owners talk on them while driving.

59% Percentage of parents that teens see talking on cell phones while driving.

42% Percentage of parents who speed.

39% Percentage of parents who drive with their radio volume up to the maximum sound.

Because 85% of Americans own cell phones, the driving-while-texting problem is likely to get worse, particularly with young people. There's a myth of invincibility with teenagers. They expect other drivers to compensate, but you can't count on that.

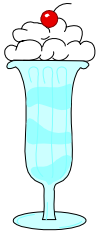
Research proves that no one is safe from the dangers of texting and driving. Texting requires the most eyes-off-the-road time of any other driving distraction. Those who think they aren't looking at the keyboard are still taking their eyes off the road long enough for the situation in front of them to change- and for them not to be able to react quickly enough to avoid a crash. Texters aren't aware of how distracted they are. But not only is texting while driving a dangerous habit; it's also illegal. But despite set laws, drivers continue to type and read messages while driving.

The good news? Teens says parents are their biggest driving influence. **The bad news?** Most parents are setting a bad example. Parents must realize what a powerful influence they are on teen drivers. Parents should set a good example and enforce consequences when rules are broken.



***DON'T TALK/TEXT
WHILE DRIVING!!***

RECIPE CORNER



FRUIT SMOOTHIE

- 1 cup calcium-fortified orange juice
- 1 banana
- ½ cup blueberries
- ½ cup fresh or frozen strawberries
- 1 cup (8 oz.) low-fat or fat-free vanilla yogurt
- 2-3 ice cubes (optional)

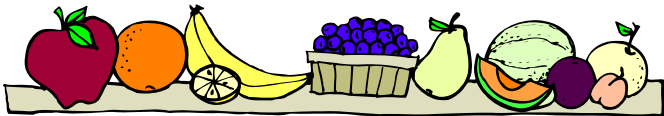
Take out:

Blender, measuring spoons, 2 glasses, knife

Steps:

1. Cut banana in half.
2. Fill blender with 1 cup orange juice.
3. Add banana, blueberries, yogurt, strawberries, and ice cubes to the blender.
4. Blend on high speed until smooth.
5. Pour into glasses and enjoy.

Makes 2 servings



PEACH CRUMBLE

Makes 3 servings, 1 cup each

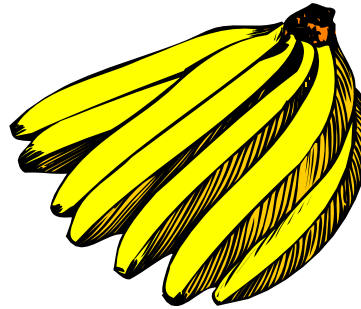
You will need:

- 3 large sheets graham crackers
- 1 tablespoon soft margarine
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 15-oz. can peaches, slices or chunks
- 1 ½ cups plain nonfat yogurt

Steps:

1. Place graham crackers in a zip top plastic bag or between two pieces of foil and crumble,

- using the unopened can of peaches as a rolling pin.
2. Melt margarine.
3. Add graham cracker crumbs and sugar to melted margarine and stir to mix.
4. Open can of peaches and drain off liquid.
5. Heat peaches until warm, 1-2 minutes.
6. Pour ½ cup plain yogurt in each of 3 small (1 cup) bowls.
7. Top each bowl with 1/3 of warm peaches.
8. Top peaches with 1/3 of graham cracker crumbs and serve.



BANANA PUDDING

- 1 small instant vanilla pudding
- 1 14-oz can condensed milk
- 1 8-oz whipped topping
- 3-4 bananas
- Vanilla wafers
- Lemon juice

Steps:

Make pudding according to directions, stir in Eagle Brand. Fold in Cool Whip. Slice bananas and add enough lemon juice to cover; (lemon juice keeps the bananas from turning brown). Place wafers in bowl, add few bananas. Pour in pudding. Repeat until ending with pudding. Crush wafers and sprinkle on top for decoration.

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH!!

***Eat at least 5 servings of
fruits & vegetables a day!
8-10 would be even better!***

For Your **INFORMATION...**

AVOID LEASE TERMINATION & EVICTION

WHO IS ALLOWED TO LIVE IN YOUR UNIT:

*Only the person(s) listed on the lease, regardless of their relationship to the head of household.

*No relatives, boyfriends, girlfriends, other family, acquaintances, etc. not listed on the lease are allowed to stay in the unit for more than 15 days in a calendar year.

*No one is to receive mail or to use the address of the unit for any purpose except for the person(s) listed on the lease.

CODE OF CONDUCT:

*Tenant and their guests should conduct themselves in a manner that will not disturb the neighbors' peaceful enjoyment of their units and will help to maintain the neighborhood in a decent, safe and sanitary condition.

*Tenant will refrain from any illegal or other activity which impairs the physical or social environment of the premises including, but not limited to, the possession, use or sale of illegal drugs or the sale of alcohol on the premises.

*Tenant and their guests shall not partake in any illegal activities of any kind.

*Tenant should not use loud, profane, abusive or threatening language.

*Tenant should not allow on their premise any individual that has been barred or banned from Housing Authority property.

REPORTING ALL FAMILY INCOME:

*Tenants are required to accurately report all sources of income. Failure to do so is considered as fraud. Tenants that fail to report all sources of income will be required to make retroactive payments. Fraud could also lead to possible jail time. The family will be responsible for any underpaid rent, and will be

required to sign a Repayment Agreement or to make a lump sum payment.

Income to be reported includes but are not limited to:

- Earned Income (employment)
- Social Security, pensions, SSI, Disability
- Unemployment Compensation
- Welfare Payments or General Assistance
- Alimony or Child Support Payments
- Net Income from a Business

Increases in Income to be Reported

- Employment of a current household member
- Income of a newly added household member
- Income from a totally new income source

Sanitation, Cleanliness, Health & Safety:

- Tenants are responsible for keeping their units free of all litter and debris and in a clean and safe condition at all times. This includes both the inside and the outside of the unit.
- Tenants shall not store gasoline or any flammable or explosive substances inside the unit or on any porch or attached area of the unit.

Operation and Upkeep of Appliances:

- All units come equipped with several appliances already installed (stove, refrigerator, heating and cooling units, etc.) If you are unsure about the proper operation of any appliances, please call the Maintenance Department at (229) 924-9073 or the Resident Services Department at (229) 924-3732.

Turned-Over Accounts:

If your account is turned over to the court for collection three (3) times during any 12-month period, you will be required to move.

The Housing Authority will assist you in every way possible to avoid eviction. However, the tenant must use every measure available to take responsibility for his/her own actions. If you have questions about any of these rules, please contact your case manager or the Resident Services Department as soon as possible.

SUMMER READING PALS 2010

June 1st thru June 24th

**Register your 1st and 2nd graders
today!!!!**

Limited Seating Available.

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