



Housing Spotlight

Highlights and News from Durham Housing Authority



Winter 2011

Volume 3, Issue 1

Front Porch

Holiday schedule:

DHA will be closed on the following days in observance of upcoming holidays:

April 25, 2011

Good Friday

Please watch WTVD-11, call our Central Office (683-1551) or check our website (durhamhousingauthority.org) for announcements of closings or delays due to inclement weather.

Thanks to our good friends at Butterball®. DHA was able to give away nearly 100 turkeys at Thanksgiving. The Housing staff conducted a raffle to determine who would win the birds and then a drawing was held at the Central Office. Chief Operating Officer Willie “Sonny” McMahan conducted the drawing (with some help from the Finance staff) as staff looked on, providing drum rolls and applause.



The real fun, of course, was found in presenting the turkeys to the winning families ... who promised to give them the full holiday treatment and put a real feast on the table.

Here are just a few of the happy faces from the Great Turkey Giveaway of 2010!



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Our residents don't take their right to vote for granted! Thanks to our good friends at Delta Sigma Theta, a trip to the polls was also a chance to make new friends and have some fun.

Get involved!

- Local elections are VERY important to your quality of life as a citizen.
- Check with the Durham Board of Elections to make sure you are registered to vote and know WHERE to vote.
- Bring friends with you to your polling place. Make a day of it!
- Find out who your elected officials are - local, state and federal - and write a letter or email to let them know what you think.

One-Stop Voting

Thanks to Dena King with the Durham Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.. They partnered with the Durham Alumni Chapter of the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. and Thorpe's Limo Service to take the seniors from J.J. Henderson Housing Center to vote during the One Stop Early Voting back in November. It was very special treatment!



Shortly after Mr. Parks arrived at DHA, he enjoyed a visit with our Congressman, Rep. David Price. On the same day of this visit, Rep. Price got a chance to meet with residents at Forest Hill Heights.

Colds & Flu - Not For You!

Tis the season for all the bugs that fly around where we work and kids go to school. Avoid the flu with a flu shot (if you can) and stay away from colds and other viruses with plenty of hand washing, fluids and rest -- just like Grandma said!



Housing Choice Voucher Staff - Trained & Ready

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program staff are trained up and ready to go. There's been a lot of classroom hours and "hitting the books" for the HCV Program staff in the last quarter of 2010. With many new employees on board and new standard procedures, there's been a lot to learn.



So as 2011 kicks off, we want to remind everyone associated with the HCV program (participants and applicants) of a few "Do's and Don'ts" in working with our staff.

Do's & Don'ts Checklist:

- **DO** put it all in writing! If you have a change to report ... like you address, your income or your family composition (got married or divorced, had a birth or death in your household). You must report these changes right away and **ONLY** in writing.
- **DO** keep copies of your correspondence with HCV staff. Keep a folder with all your vital records in it.
- **DON'T** make multiple calls to the staff to report changes or ask general questions. This only backs up our phone system and causes further delays.
- **DON'T** drop into the office without an appointment unless it's a genuine emergency.

We're working on ways to improve our responsiveness and we appreciate your patience. Together, we'll make 2011 a banner year!

FEEDBACK?

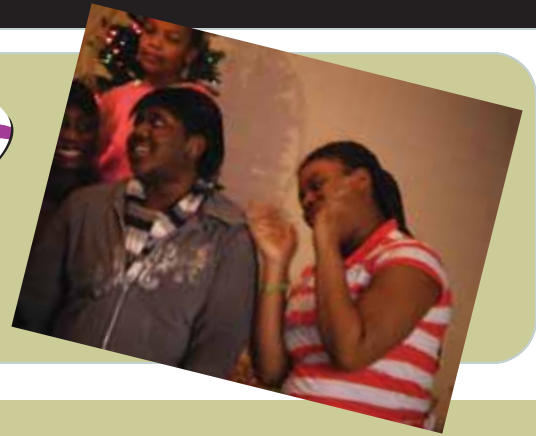
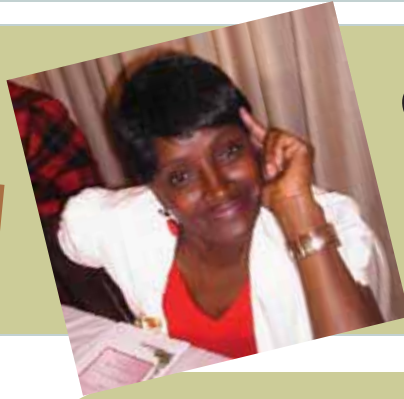
Yes, please! We'd love to hear from you.

Jean Bolduc
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Holiday Luncheon



Starting with the welcome from Resident Services staff to the delicious food (more pie, please) to the music and MORE music and wonderful recognition for Resident Council leaders, we all had a BLAST at the Holiday luncheon at J.J. Henderson Housing Center on December 20. This event promises to be the hottest ticket in town next year, honoring community leaders and showing appreciation and fellowship.

Congratulations to honorees, resident council leaders, singing seniors and children's choir on a job well done!



housing

Best Christmas EVER!

Auranda Hughley, the mother of four children under the age of five, lost her truck in November 2010 as she was having a hard time maintaining payments. Through the TEA Party program offered through Resident Services and the generosity of Rick Hendrick Chevrolet, Ms. Hughley won this beautiful car!



Building Family Strengths

BY: JORDAN MCMICAN
EDUCATION COORDINATOR
RESIDENT SERVICES

To increase parent involvement and build strong families, the Dropout Prevention Program held Chewing Parent Night at the Club Boulevard Community. The event was held on November 2nd, 2010.

The Chewing Middle school administration and staff came out to build a connection with the community, and support the after-school services provided by DHA's Resident Services Staff. Principal James Key spoke to parents about Chewing's **Promise to Parents** and encouraged open dialogue. Through the duration of the event the 6th grade Step Team provided entertainment, Chewing and Resident Services Staff provided parents with a calendar of events for parents and students, and the PTSA president spoke about how parents can get involved in the school. The program concluded with a Parent Panel and dinner catered by Hog Heaven. In addition to these events two children received free flu shots provided by the Health Department.



Dinner from Hog Heaven!



Parents Night at Chewing Middle School

RESIDENT SERVICES

For more information about the **many** great programs offered through DHA's Resident Services Department, please call (919) 683-8596

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560-1200

Durham One Call Does It All!

560-1200

Durham One Call is open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday except holidays. The department also provides an on-line service request form that allows citizens to request services 24-hours-a-day, seven days a week. To help citizens who visit City Hall, a Durham One Call representative is located in the City Hall lobby. Bi-lingual representatives speaking Spanish and other languages are available as well. Durham One Call is a division of the City Manager's Office.

For more information

To learn more about the City of Durham's FOG program, contact Tyrone Battle Industrial Waste Control Supervisor City of Durham (919) 560-4386

Fats, Oils & Grease (FOG)

Here are some important tips from the City of Durham about managing Fats, Oils and Grease associated with cooking for your family:

YES! Please do:

- Put oil and grease in collection containers (coffee cans work very well).
- Remove oil and grease from kitchen utensils, equipment, and food preparation areas with scrapers/towels/brooms.
- Keep grease out of wash water.
- Place food scraps in collection containers.

NO! Please do not:

- Pour oil and grease down drains as this will promote clogging.
- Wash fryers, pots/pans, and plates with water until oil and grease are removed.
- Use hot water to rinse grease off surfaces.
- Put food scraps down drains.

Fats, Oil and Grease (FOG)

When cooking fats, oils and grease are poured down the drain, they tend to collect and stick to household plumbing and sewer lines. Over time blockages occur that lead to sewer backups and overflows.



A TIP FOR TAX TIME

If you were working during 2010, you should learn more about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) when it's time to file your 2010 tax return. It's a special tax credit for people in lower income ranges. If you qualify, it can mean money in your pocket - often hundreds of dollars. Each year, there is usually free tax preparation help offered at the Durham County Library.



ON THE MONEY

DHA's Finance & Administration Department wants to remind you that Automatic Draft is a great way to make sure your rent is paid on time every month. No worries about making a trip to DHA's Central Office to make payment or relying on the mail to get it delivered on time.

In order to participate, you must have a checking or savings account and you will need to complete an *ACH Withdrawal Request Form* (available at your property management office). Once enrolled, payments are automatically withdrawn from your account on the fifth business day of each month.



Let's look at some examples:

In February 2011, the first of the month is on a Tuesday. The fifth *business* day, then, would be on the next Monday, February 7th. That's when your rent would be drafted out of your account.

In May 2011, the first of the month falls on a Sunday, so the fifth business day is on Friday, May 6th.

DHA has been operating this program for over a year now with great success. Ms. Vivian McEachern, a resident of J.J. Henderson Housing Center, is glad she enrolled. "The direct deposit has been a very good thing for me," she said. "I don't have to worry about my rent getting paid on time. It saves me time from running to the check cashing place, getting a money order and taking my rent to the DHA office. Direct deposit is the best way to go."

Stop by your DHA Management Office and ask about Automatic Draft.

Yes, it's tax time already!

Free tax preparation help is available at the Durham Co. Library on SATURDAYS -- **FEB. 5 and 19th, 2011 and MARCH 5 and 19th, 2011**

From 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM

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Chief Executive Officer
Dallas J. Parks

The Last Word from CEO Dallas J. Parks



The Durham Housing Authority, like so many public agencies, has seen its share of financial challenges in 2010; but overall, it has been a productive year for Durham Housing Authority. The changes in DHA’s staffing and business processes will drive much-needed progress in 2011, serving the Durham community more efficiently and effectively.

A year ago, DHA’s Housing Choice Voucher program was designated as “troubled” by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), struggling to comply with regulations, understaffed and backlogged with work. Today the program is designated as “standard performing” and fully staffed, with continuous improvement of customer service delivery a top priority. Nearly 1,000 landlords participate in the

Housing Choice Voucher program. We appreciate their partnership.

In its public housing program, DHA’s 14 communities have high occupancy rates, strong resident councils and vibrant Resident Services programs – too many to list. All of these factors have contributed to the Public Housing program’s continuing at the high end of “standard performing” status.

The coming years should be very exciting for DHA in the area of Development as we close out our HOPE VI program and look toward new horizons. Downtown Durham and the NorthEastCentral neighborhood in particular have seen amazing redevelopment activity, much of which was sparked by HOPE VI. As we look to the future, we are anxious to engage the community with our effort to win a Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) grant for the McDougald Terrace neighborhood as well as many other prospects to breathe new life into other weary neighborhoods.

Dallas J. Parks