



**BRHA BEACON
IS**

**THE SERC-NAHRO 2010
AGENCY NEWSLETTER
OF THE YEAR**

AWARD WINNER



FALL 2010



BRHA BEACON

Message From the Director

As I sit and write this we have completed about 75% of the improvements at the “Courtyard Mosby” apartments. We have replaced the roofs on these 20 apartments, installed new windows and doors, upgraded the electrical system and installed brand new heat pumps. Residents in these apartments will now have the comfort of central air-conditioning in our hot summers (see pg 8 for pictures). Our last bit of work will be painting these buildings, as weather conditions permit.

We were able to do all of this work as a result of the so-called Stimulus Funds that were provided by the federal government under the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA). These Stimulus Funds also allowed us to repaint all the buildings in both Rice Terrace and Johnson Court (see pg. 3), to put automatic opening doors on Jones and Stant and to replace the leaky roof on our central office building.

All together we will have spent over \$1 million on these improvements that directly impact the comfort and the attractiveness of where you live. And we think the apartment complexes look great – better than they have looked in years!! So when you walk through the front door of a freshly painted building or through the automatic opening doors or turn up that new thermostat, remember that \$1 million and the small (or maybe not-so-small) piece of it that has touched you or your family – and help us preserve and maintain these improvements.

I’d also like to bring your attention to some Resident Awareness Training that we have begun offering (see pg 5). There is a lot going on now that may impact you. Take advantage of this opportunity to become better informed.

And did you hear that we have a new Cub Scout troop at BRHA?? (See page 7 for details.)

Let’s all work together to take care of our community.

Sincerely,
Dave Baldwin

Reward for TIPS

We need your help to get rid of drugs in our community. We don't see or catch everything that is happening on the sites during the day, and we are not there at night. We don't hear a lot of the talk that passes among neighbors. But you live in these neighborhoods and you may see things or hear things that can help us get rid of illegal drugs. We encourage you to get involved in keeping your own neighborhood safe by letting us know what you have seen or heard that may be connected with illegal drug activity happening in your neighborhood. Call the police department tips line at 276-466-TIPS. The Housing Authority Board has authorized a reward of **up to \$1,000** for tips that lead to the arrest and conviction of persons involved in illegal drug activity on Housing Authority property. The Bristol Redevelopment and Housing Authority is dedicated to providing you with safe, attractive, and affordable housing. We are doing our part to the best of our ability to provide you and your family with a quality apartment and a safe neighborhood while you live with us. Please let us know if you have any suggestions on how we can work together to insure a drug-free community in your neighborhood.

BRHA TIPS Reward Program Up to \$ 1,000

- Participants: Anyone in the Community
- Activity: Illegal Drug Activity involving Meth or Cocaine
- Call the TIPS Line (276 466-TIPS)
- Must Lead to Arrest and Conviction
- Methamphetamine (Meth) and/or Cocaine





What a Difference!!!

Isn't it amazing what some fresh paint and trim will do for a building?

The buildings in the Rice Terrace and Johnson Court Complexes have new paint and painted trim work. Repairs were made to gutters and downspouts. These improvements were made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act signed by President Obama.



BED BUG PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Bed bugs have become an increasing problem for residents around the country. It is important to be able to identify if you have a bed bug problem, and what steps to take to eliminate them and to prevent them from returning.

Bed bugs are reddish brown in color, flat, and oval-shaped. They are about ¼ inch long, which is about the size of an apple seed. They often leave behind tiny, rust-colored stains that have a syrup-like smell, similar to soda pop, or black specks. Look for signs of bugs here:

- On mattress tags and seams
- On ceilings
- Under seat cushions
- Behind headboards
- In tiny cracks and crevices
- Around light switches

Bed bugs like to settle close to their food source...which is you! During the day, they do not live in the bed, but often hide within 5 feet of the bed. Make sure to check under your mattress and bed frame, near baseboards, behind picture frames, in night stands, under buckling wallpaper or carpet, and in areas with excessive heat or moisture.

Although bed bugs do not transmit disease, they do bite, draw blood, and can cause welts and itching. Just the fact that you are sharing a bed with these bugs can cause much anxiety and anguish. There are a number of ways to prevent them:

- Clear any clutter such as paper or trash.
- Be sure to inspect any second-hand furniture you receive.
- Do not bring discarded furniture into your apartment.
- Inspect your luggage after traveling.
- Dry your clothes on high heat.
- Inspect your apartment regularly, especially after moving in or after trips.

IF YOU HAVE AN INFESTATION, NOTIFY YOUR PROPERTY MANAGER IMMEDIATELY.

* Taken from HUD e-newsletter "The Resident" which can be found at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/pubs/newsltr-res-oct10.pdf>

Laura Blevins to Work with Residents to Retain Housing

Ms. Blevins is the new ROSS Coordinator, she will be assisting families that may be in jeopardy of losing their housing for any number of reasons. Residents that are having problems paying their rent, those who have been put on notice for lease violations, or others that are having problems should contact Ms. Blevins for a consultation.

You may contact her at 276-821-6273, or pay her a visit at the Find-a-Way office in the "O" building on Mary Street.

Families Enjoy "National Night Out"

On Tuesday August 3, families in the Community enjoyed the "National Night Out" that was sponsored by local law enforcement, Target and the Housing Authority.

There was food, games, music, and fun for all. The event was held in the "Mosby Courtyard" area where many improvements have taken place.

The Housing Authority would like to extend a big "THANK YOU" to Target and Target employees for their donation and help in making this event successful.

Local law enforcement personnel were there to mix and mingle with folk.



Important Notice To Residents About Statements

Beginning November 1st we will be sending additional notices to the residents who have excess utility charges and work order charges. The excess utility bills will be sent the first week of the month to let you know the details about what your costs are going to be for the next month. The work order bills will be sent out on the 15th of the month with the billing statements to give you more detail about work order charges that are included on your monthly billing statement.

The regular billing statement will include all amounts due for the current month including excess utilities and work orders. This is the statement that should be taken to the bank.

TAKE REGULAR STATEMENT WITH ALL CHARGES TO THE BANK!

Reminders from your Housing Management Department

- Please don't take any furniture items or bedding that has been set outside by anyone; there is a possibility they were set out because of bug infestation.
- All vehicles must be operable and have current up to date license plates and Housing Authority decals to avoid having them towed.
- Please pay your rent on time to avoid late charges, court cost and possible eviction.
- You are responsible for the actions of your guest.

Barred List Available to Residents

The BRHA maintains an updated list of individuals who have been barred from coming onto the Housing Authority's grounds. Residents may pick up a copy of this list at the BRHA's Edmond Street office

REMINDER

"TIPS Cards are available at the front desk at our office. If you are aware of any drug dealers, drug houses, drug related crimes, other criminal activity, and/or any quality of life issues, please report them on this card.

You can make a difference!

Resident Awareness Training

Resident Awareness Training for Jones Manor, Stant Hall and Rice Terrace are scheduled as follows:

Rice Terrace--Wed.Nov 17th 2:00 pm BRHA Training Room-Limited Seating, 1st 25 people

Jones Manor--Thurs. Nov.18th 11:00 am Jones Manor Lounge-Limited Seating, 1st 25 people

Stant Hall--Thurs. Nov. 18th 2:00 pm, Stant Hall Lounge--Limited Seating, 1st 25 people

These training sessions are not mandantory, but will be very helpful and informative for residents. Please plan to attend.

Training for Bonham Circle, Mosby Homes, Johnson Court, and Sapling Grove will take place in early 2011, watch for flyers.

A number of topics will be discussed during the sessions, and will help keep Residents abreast of what's happening in their communities.

As Winter Approaches Be Prepared to Conserve Energy to Reduce Utility Bills

The following tips will be helpful in savings on heating bills:

- Did you know that for every degree you reduce the heat within the 60-70° range will save you 2% on your heating costs. Running at 5° less will save you 10% on your next bill. Turn your thermostat down to 68 degrees if possible.
- Lower the thermostat when you are away for more than 4 hours at a time. The energy used to reheat your home will be less than what it would take to keep your home heated while you were gone. 55° is a good target.
- Dress warmer for cold weather, wear sweaters and socks
- Let the sunshine in during the day, open curtains for natural light and warmth, close them at night to retain the heat
- Try to arrange furniture so that you are sitting near interior walls
- Replace bulbs with energy star bulbs. The price in these bulbs have started to decrease. These bulbs use 75% less energy and last 10 times longer than regular bulbs
- Make sure lights are turned off in unoccupied rooms. Turn off TV's when no one is in the room watching them. Put computers and monitors to sleep when not in use
- Shorten showers
- Turn off kitchen and bathroom ventilation fans when not in use
- Use door sweeps to block air from outside

As We Approach the Holiday Season, Watch for Notices and Flyers

For the past several years, Thanksgiving dinners, Christmas dinners, and other activities have been conducted in the BRHA communities.

Flyers announcing the activities will be distributed closer to time for the activities. This is a wonderful way to meet and mingle.

Each year in December, Lynn Pannell, the Find-a-Way Coordinator has an Award Banquet for the Find-a-Way participants. The banquet allows the FAW participants to be recognized for their milestones and achievements they have accomplished during the year towards self-sufficiency. This is the Housing Authority's way of saying "we're proud of you". Participants and their families are invited to this celebration, a nice dinner is served, awards are given, there is entertainment and a good time for all. Lynn will send out invitations to this event.



Use of the Resident Services Building

The Resident Services Building is located on Clinton Avenue. The Housing Authority has begun using this location for activities and meetings.

Chief's Kids meet here every Monday at 6:00 pm.

Cub Scouts meeting-3:45 pm on Mondays.

Five-year/Annual Plan

BRHA must submit to HUD every January a Five-year/Annual Plan for the fiscal year beginning on April 1. Staff is working on the Plan at this time. The Plan will be available for public comment beginning November 1st. A Public Hearing to discuss the plan is scheduled for Monday, December 20th at 4:00 pm at the BRHA Administrative Office.

Thank you to the RAB Members

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Resident Advisory Board for their participation.

The next meeting of the RAB is scheduled for 6:00 pm on November 30th, the major topic for discussion at this meeting will be the discussion of the PHA Five-year/Annual Plan.

The Housing Authority Staff is very much interested in the input from Residents in preparing the plan.

NEW!!!! Cub Scouts

The Boy Scouts of America has partnered with the Bristol Redevelopment and Housing Authority to start a new pack of 1st to 5th grade Cub Scouts in our community. The Cub Scouts meet every Monday from 3:45 pm-4:45 pm in the Resident Services Center to learn skills and play games that foster citizenship, fair play and responsibility in their daily lives. Cub Scouts get a chance to go camping, play sports, build derby cars and interact with professional adults to encourage them to become model citizens from an early age, not to mention having fun along the way. The Cub Scouts are led by volunteer scout Reece Miller, who also works for the local Boys and Girls Club and former Boy Scout Eric Hill, who is an Americorps VISTA worker for the Housing Authority. For more information about the Boy Scouts, their history and their programs, visit www.scouting.org. For information about the Housing Authority's Cub Scout pack, call Eric Hill at 273-821-6258 or e-mail him at ehill@brha.com.





**Improvements at the Mosby Courtyard
are Great!!!!!!**

The units in the Mosby Courtyard have gotten some much needed improvements, and they look great!!! The units got new roofs and trim, new HVAC systems, and new windows and doors. Not only do they look great, but they are also more energy efficient. The units are scheduled to be painted, but that might be delayed due to the weather.



Find A Way Helps Families Attain Better Way of Life

The BRHA wants to see all of its residents succeed. Through the Find-A-Way Program, BRHA is enabling families to realize an improved quality of life.

The Find-A-Way (FAW) program has been growing!! Participants are busy meeting their goals and achieving great things in their lives. It is great to see people who are making a real difference in their lives.

We have participants who are enrolled in the Medical Assistant Program, LPN program and CNA class. We also have one who is enrolled at Virginia Highlands Community College. There are three others who are in the application process for other training programs and several who are working on their GED. It is exciting to see those who are eager to learn!

We have also had several participants who have started new jobs. There have been five who have started working full time this year. Several others are working part-time jobs. In this economy, jobs are really hard to find. The Find A Way program has many connections in the community and has had success in helping many participants find employment.

There have been many workshops and training opportunities for our Find A Way people. In September, Lisa Whelchel was the keynote speaker at a day long workshop called "Celebrate Your Family". She encouraged participants to "hang in there" when times get tough. She shared her story as she grew up playing the part of Blair on the TV show "The Facts of Life". Everyone there could see how "ordinary" she was and how much she could relate with "ordinary" people. Area agencies provided mini-workshops on the subjects

of budgeting, homeownership, parenting, drug and alcohol abuse awareness and internet safety.

The Find a Way program continues to work to help residents of BRHA. There are still spots available in the program for residents who may want to begin working on changing their future. If you would like more information on the program, please call Lynn Pannell at 276-821-6270 or stop by the FAW office at 600 W. Mary Street. Bristol, VA.

FAWP Disaster/Emergency Preparedness Workshop

From all developments, twenty-five Find A Way Plus ("FAWP") participants gathered in the Stant Hall Resident Lounge to learn how to be prepared for an emergency or disaster.

Alan Slagle, American Red Cross Volunteer Disaster Consultant, spoke to the group regarding the importance of being prepared. He asked questions about what we knew or what we thought would be a good plan.

There were some good answers and some misconceptions about what to do. Mr. Slagle talked about types of disasters and the length of time for a City to get back to normal operations if water, electricity, and phone service was interrupted for several days or several weeks. He handed out literature that included lists of items each person in a household would need. Mr. Slagle went through each item in his disaster kit and the importance of each item. After all questions had been answered, each FAWP participant who had signed up for the class and attended received a basic disaster/emergency preparedness kit and understood what they would need to add to the kit.

Welcome To Eric Hill

Eric has recently joined the BRHA staff. He will be working with the Resident Advisory Board (RAB) and with the Resident Associations.

Eric Hill is a recent graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University who was interested in doing a year of service for Americorps VISTA. After working for a homeless services center in Richmond he became interested in pursuing a career in non-profit work which would advance sustainable housing, communities and the environment. Eric is a jack of all trades who asks questions most people wouldn't because he likes to know a little bit about everything. He also pursues writing, enjoys the outdoors, likes to cook and would one day like to go back to school for an advanced degree in physics or mathematics.

Welcome to Mike Leonard

Mike is the newest member in the Maintenance Department. Mike is a resident of the Housing Authority where he has been active in the Resident Association and the Resident Activity Committee. Mike attended Northeast State for 2.5 years where he pursued an education in welding and metal fabrication. Welcome to Mike Leonard.

Nick Hammitt Makes Internal Move

Nick has been on the Housing Authority staff for several years as a Maintenance Mechanic. Nick has made an internal move and is now part of the "Construction Crew".

Congratulations to Mitzi Oliver

Many of you know Mitzi as one of the Maintenance Crew. Mitzi has been promoted to Mechanic Aide. Congratulations to Mitzi on a job "well done"!

Welcome to Laura Blevins

The Bristol Redevelopment and Housing Authority would like to welcome its newest employee, Laura Blevins. Laura is the new ROSS Coordinator and will be working with Lynn Pannell in the "O" building. Laura is a native of Sullivan County, TN and a graduate of King College. Over the last few years Laura has been involved with several local agencies such as the Boys and Girls Club and as an advocate for abused and neglected children through CASA.. She is looking forward to working with individuals and families who are in need of community resources and a guiding hand.

TRASH RECEPTACLES COMING SOON!

Have you noticed work going on in your areas? The Maintenance Crew is setting forms for trash receptacles. The receptacles will be placed throughout the BRHA properties in hopes of keeping the grounds free of trash. If everyone uses the trash receptacles it will definitely help the look and feel of the community. Please encourage your children to use the receptacles.

Your help is greatly appreciated!!



The staff of the Bristol Redevelopment and Housing Authority would like to wish every one Happy Holidays!!!

Thanksgiving is coming soon and all of us should take time to give thanks for all that we have. Remember, there are always those who are less fortunate.

The Christmas season is just around the corner, we wish all a very Merry Christmas and a healthy, happy New Year!!!

Look what a cute snack for the Thanksgiving Holiday

Kids will love using their favorite candies to make these festive edible Thanksgiving decorations. These serve as wonderful desserts to top off a Thanksgiving meal.

Ingredients

- Canned vanilla frosting
- Round cracker
- Corn candies
- Chocolate kisses
- Caramel

Directions

- Spread some canned vanilla frosting on a round cracker.
- Place a chocolate kiss near the bottom of the cracker.
- Add corn candies above the kiss to make feathers; place one corn candy on the kiss for the head.
- Let frosting dry.
- To make "turkey" stand up, attach a caramel to the back with more frosting.
- Make-Ahead Tip: Make these edible decorations up to 3 days ahead. Store in airtight container.



HOW TO REACH US:

Main Phone: (276) 642-2001
Fax: (276) 642-2015
E-mail: contact@brha.com
Web site: www.brha.com

Property Managers:
Patricia Tignor (276) 821-6257
Shiela Wambolt (276) 821-6263

Maintenance: (276) 642-2006

MISSION STATEMENT

The BRHA will provide safe, attractive, affordable housing and housing assistance, and the opportunity for families and others in need to achieve a higher standard of living.

DATES TO REMEMBER

BRHA Board Meetings

- Held the third Monday of each month at 4:00 pm

Resident Council Meetings to be Announced

Applications

- Public Housing - every Tuesday and Thursday
- Housing Choice Vouchers - Wednesdays Only

Office Closing:

November 11 (Thursday) – Veterans Day
November 25 & 26 - Thanksgiving Holiday
December 24 & 27 - Christmas Holiday
January 1 (Friday) – New Years Day Holiday
January 17 (Monday) – Martin Luther King



Bristol Redevelopment and Housing Authority
809 Edmond Street
Bristol, Virginia 24201