

CITY OF KEY WEST HOLIDAY PARADE

This year, the Key West Housing Authority seized the opportunity to showcase its holiday spirit in the City of Key West's annual Christmas Parade. The parade, a cherished tradition in our community, provided a platform for us to come together and celebrate the magic of the season.

The KWAH team was overjoyed to see the smiles on the faces of our fellow community members as we passed by during the parade. It was a heartwarming experience to connect with residents, neighbors, and friends, fostering a sense of togetherness that defines the true spirit of the holidays.

As we continue to embrace the holiday season, let us carry the spirit of community and goodwill with us. We look forward to more opportunities to come together and create lasting memories. Wishing you all a joyful and festive holiday season!

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IMPORTANT DATES

- Christmas Day—December 25
(KWAH Offices Closed
December 25 and December 26)
- Kwanzaa (first day)—December 26
- New Year's Day—January 1
(KWAH Offices Closed
January 1 and January 2)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—January 15
- 1st Day of Black History Month—February 1
- Groundhog Day—February 2
- Valentine's Day—February 14
- Presidents' Day—February 19
(KWAH Offices Closed)
- 1st Day of Women's History Month—March 1
- Saint Patrick's Day—March 17



HISTORICAL REMEMBRANCE

Monroe Priority High for Housing

Over fifty years ago, on November 10, 1973, the Miami Herald newspaper reported there was an insufficient supply of low-cost housing in the Florida Keys. The article added that this deficit directly impacted businesses and motel owners' ability to hire and retain workers, causing them to "import" employees from the Homestead area.

Despite past and ongoing efforts by the Monroe County Housing Authority, and other public and private developers, to create affordable housing, some things never change!

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Residents,

As many of you may know, this past season we experienced the loss of our esteemed former Board Member, Roosevelt C. Sands, Jr. His passing had a profound impact on KWA board members and staff, and the citizens of our community, and we are deeply saddened by the departure of our cherished colleague and friend.

Mr. Sands served on the KWA board for an astounding 52 years as a dedicated advocate for our housing community, contributing his time, expertise, and passion to enhance the well-being of all residents. His impact reached far and wide, leaving an indelible mark on the projects and initiatives that have shaped our community into what it is today.

As we come together to mourn the loss of Roosevelt C. Sands, let us also celebrate the legacy he leaves behind. Mr. Sands was an instrumental part of the development of the Senior Citizen Plaza and the Jack T. Murray Senior Citizen Complex, the acquisition of Poinciana Plaza, the construction of the Harry L. Bethel Roosevelt Gardens Apartments, the

construction of the Roosevelt C. Sands, Jr. Affordable Housing Complex, the acquisition of the Washington Street Complex, Third Street & Patterson Avenue Complex, and the Old Town Scattered Sites, the construction of the Frank P. Toppino Poinciana Gardens Senior Living Complex, & the development of the Garden View Apartments. His unwavering commitment to creating a better living environment for all will continue to inspire us in our ongoing efforts.

At October's board meeting, the Board of Commissioners posthumously appointed Mr. Roosevelt C. Sands, Jr. as Commissioner Emeritus of the Housing Authority. This appointment will last as an everlasting tribute to Mr. Sands' exceptional dedication, vision, and service to the KWA and the community it serves.

Our thoughts are with Commissioner Sands' family during this difficult time. We extend our deepest sympathies to them and to all who had the privilege of knowing and working alongside him. May Commissioner Sands rest in peace, and may we find solace in the shared memories that bind us together as a community.

In service,
Randy Sterling

“God’s been good to us and we’ve got to realize it. Look over your shoulder and tell him, “Thanks!” Thanks for everything he’s done.” - Roosevelt C. Sands, Jr.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Ms. Natalie Herrington
Administrator of Poinciana Gardens

Interview by Peter Batty



Natalie is the administrator at Poinciana Gardens, the Housing Authority's assisted living and supported housing complex on Duck Avenue. She is relatively new to the Housing Authority, having worked at Poinciana Gardens for a little over 15 months. However, Natalie brings a world of experience to her job as she has been a Licensed Practical Nurse her entire adult life and her career focus has always been on elder care. Prior to working at Poinciana Gardens, she worked at Palm Vista Nursing & Rehabilitation Center on College Road. Natalie is married to Ronald and she has three adult children aged 27, 25, and 22. She has lived in the same house on Big Pine for the last 30 years and is happy and proud to be called a "Piner."

Where are you from? **I am from Rockland, Massachusetts, which is located on the south shore.**

What is your favorite restaurant? **Without question our favorite is the Square Grouper on Cudjoe Key.**

Do you have any pets? **Yes, we have two dogs! One is an English Bulldog named Aurora and the other is a Havanese named Roxy.**

If you could change anything about the Keys, what would it be? **The traffic. But, unfortunately, it's not something that anyone can do anything about.**

What are your hobbies? **I love anything to do with the water: boating, fishing, snorkeling. But I also love musical theater & shows. As a matter of fact, we plan to go the Broward Center to see Mrs. Doubtfire in February or March.**



JOB OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE KEY WEST HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Housing Authority of the City of Key West, Florida is dedicated to providing excellent customer service and assistance to its tenants, applicants, and landlords by employing and retaining a highly qualified and well-trained staff that supports its mission.

Current Employment Openings (as of 12/21/2023):

- Grounds Caretaker (F/T)
- Housing Assistant (F/T)
- Housing Manager (F/T)
- HVAC Maintenance Mechanic (F/T)
- Maintenance Mechanic (F/T)
- O&A Assistant (P/T & F/T)

How To Apply:

To apply for a position with the KWhA, please submit a completed Application for Employment, a completed Criminal & Traffic Background Authorization Form, & a signed job description for the position you are applying for.

Via Email:

Mary Martinez
Human Resources & Risk
Management Manager
MartinezM@kwaha.org

Via Postal Service or Hand Delivery:

The Housing Authority of the
City of Key West, Florida
Attn: Human Resources
1400 Kennedy Drive
Key West, FL 33040

Be fire smart with electricity in your home.

47, There are approximately 47,000 home electrical fires each year.



Half of all home electrical fires involve home wiring or lighting equipment.

Home electrical fire deaths peak between midnight and 8 a.m.



Peak months for electrical fire deaths are December and January.

Plug only heat-producing appliance (like a coffee maker, space heater or microwave) directly into a wall outlet at a time.

Never use an extension cord with a heat-producing appliance.

Extension cords should only be used temporarily. Have an electrician install additional wall outlets where you need them.



For more information about electrical fire safety, visit usfa.fema.gov and nfpa.org/public-education.

Sea inteligente con la electricidad en su casa.

47, Cada año hay aproximadamente 47,000 incendios eléctricos en el hogar.



La mitad de todos los incendios eléctricos domésticos involucran cableado doméstico o equipo de iluminación.

La mayoría de las muertes por incendios eléctricos en el hogar se producen entre la medianoche y las 8 a.m.



Los meses pico en que se producen las muertes por incendios eléctricos son de diciembre y enero.

Solo conecte 1 electrodomestico que genere calor (como una cafetera, calentador ambiental o microondas) directamente a un tomacorriente de pared a la vez.

Nunca utilice un cable de extension con un electrodomestico que produzca calor.

Los cables de extension solo deben utilizarse de manera temporal. Haga que un electricista instale tomacorrientes de pared adicionales donde los necesite.



Para obtener más información acerca de la seguridad contra incendios eléctricos, visite usfa.fema.gov y nfpa.org/public-education.



ANNUAL HOLIDAY DINNER AT SENIOR CITIZEN PLAZA



PEST CONTROL SCHEDULE



Fort Village—
3rd Wednesday of each month

Garden View Apartments—
1st Wednesday of each month

George Allen Apartments—
2nd Wednesday of each month

Jack T. Murray Senior Complex—
2nd Wednesday of each month

Lang Milian Apartments—
2nd Wednesday of each month

Poinciana Gardens—
2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month

Robert Gabriel Apartments—
3rd Wednesday of each month

Roosevelt C. Sands, Jr. Affordable Housing Complex—
3rd Wednesday of each month

Senior Citizen Plaza—
4th Wednesday of each month

Please promptly report any pest control issues, including bed bugs, to the Maintenance Department or your property manager.

LOOKING BACK

Autumn was an exciting season at the Housing Authority! Below are just a few of the highlights:

- ◆ Exterior painting of Fort Village was completed.
- ◆ Held a surplus sale, disposing of obsolete and unneeded equipment.
- ◆ Created a new Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plan (ACOP).
- ◆ Celebrated the opening of the Lower Keys Scattered Sites, a brand new development of 12 single family homes in the Big Pine Key area.
- ◆ Conducted 2 resident meetings, one at SCP and one at Lang Milian.
- ◆ Obtained authorization from the board to begin negotiations with a developer partner for the future Lang Milian community redevelopment project.
- ◆ Recognized Ms. Paulette Rivas for 30 years of service with the Housing Authority.
- ◆ Awarded Mr. Michael Powell the award for Employee of the 3rd Quarter.
- ◆ Procured a contractor to replace the roof of the Maintenance Building on Kennedy Drive.

RESIDENT ACTIVITIES & OPPORTUNITIES WITH MR. GARY

We are ringing in the New Year with Dr Seuss! “You’ll never get bored when you try something new. There’s really no limit to what you can do.”

Our Generous Community Partners Care!

The Saint Mary’s Star of the Sea - Basilica School’s 3rd Grade Choir performed joyful Christmas Carol concerts for senior citizens at our Senior Citizen Plaza and Poinciana Gardens Senior Living Complex.

The Poinciana Elementary School students in the Student Council and Music Class celebrated the holidays with senior citizens at our Senior Citizen Plaza by distributing Christmas cards and a joyful holiday musical performance.

The Key West High School Band invited our residents and staff to attend both Winter Holiday Band Concerts.

The Key West Art & Historical Society donated 13 fully decorated Christmas trees to families selected by our housing managers. KWAHS Holiday Bazaar Festival of Trees is a partnership event sponsored by the museum, their patrons, MARC House, U-Haul and students from 13 Key West school classrooms who decorated the trees. A special shout out to the Housing Authority’s Santa’s Helpers team who delivered the trees and set them in place for our families.

Williams Hall generously funded their 12 Days of Christmas gift program for 13 deserving families again this year. This amazing program is a collaborative effort with Saint Mary’s Basilica School who organizes and wraps all the gifts for these deserving families. Please search Williams Hall on social media to learn more. Williams Hall also offers free classes for all of our residents. Go online to <https://williamshall.org/> to check out the current calendar for eligible classes at 729 Fleming Street in Key West.

We are announcing the following fabulous opportunities for 2024!

After School Program Enrollment is OPEN for our FREE 2024 program. Please call Mr. Gary to schedule a classroom visit. Our classroom is at our Lang Milian Apartment Complex, building 13-G, at 301 White Street. Program schedule is Mondays & Wednesdays, after school from 3:45 pm until 7 pm. We offer homework assistance, structured activities, and a snack program for elementary and middle school students. Program activities continue during school holidays, too! Also, we still have gifts to share with resident families while supplies last.

We have begun an Adult Literacy Program for our Garden View residents. Please contact your housing manager for details and schedules.

We are working with Monroe County Social Services to develop a local shopping trip program for senior citizens at Senior Citizen Plaza and Jack Murray Senior Complex. Please contact your housing manager for more details or call Mr. Gary.

Gary Young Contact Info

Email: youngg@kwha.org
Telephone: (305) 747-0326

Leave a message with your name, address, and phone number.