



THE Key Wester

a seasonal newsletter for residents of the



HOUSING AUTHORITY

OF THE CITY OF KEY WEST, FLORIDA

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IMPORTANT DATES



Independence Day—July 4
(KWAH Offices Closed)

National Senior Citizens Day—August 18

Primary Election Day—August 20

Women's Equality Day—August 26

Labor Day—September 2
(KWAH Offices Closed)

Patriot Day—September 11



Beat the Heat: Cool Off at the Library!



As summer temperatures soar, finding a cool, comfortable place to spend time without spending a small fortune becomes a top priority. Consider making the library your go-to destination. The Key West Library at 700 Fleming Street offers air-conditioned spaces perfect for relaxing with a good book or engaging in a variety of activities. Beyond its collection of books, the library offers an assortment of programs and events to keep you entertained. From summer reading challenges for kids and adults, to workshops, movie screenings, and guest lectures, there's something for everyone. Parents will find the library an excellent resource for keeping children engaged during the school break. Storytime sessions, craft activities, and educational games can make the library a second home for young minds to learn and explore. So, when the summer heat becomes too much to bear, remember that your local library is more than just a place for books—it's a community hub offering experiences for all ages. Check out www.keyslibraries.org or visit in person to discover all the ways you can stay cool and engaged this summer!



IT'S ELECTION SEASON!

Exercise your right to vote.

How to register:

Complete and submit a FL Voter Registration Application Form by mail or in person to:

- ◆ Supervisor of Elections' office—5200 College Rd, Key West, FL 33040
- ◆ Any office that issues driver licenses,
- ◆ Any voter registration agency (public assistance office, center for independent living, office serving persons with disabilities, public library, or armed forces recruitment office), or
- ◆ The Division of Elections

Register online: RegistertoVoteFlorida.gov

Voter Registration Requirements

- U.S. citizen and resident of Florida and county
- At least 18 years old (or 16 for pre-registration)
- Not adjudicated mentally incapacitated, or if so, voting rights restored.

Deadline to Register for the
Primary Election is **July 22nd**
Deadline to Register for the
General Election is **Oct. 2nd**



HISTORICAL REMEMBRANCE

Fair Housing Act



In 1968, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act was passed. It prohibits housing discrimination, including refusal to rent or sell a home to any person based on their color, race, national origin, or religion. In 1974, a prohibition of discrimination on the basis of one's gender was added, and in 1988, families with children and people with disabilities were added to the list of protected classes. In February, 2021, HUD implemented a prohibition of LGBT discrimination in federally assisted housing programs.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As the Executive Director of Key West Housing Authority, I want to take this opportunity to remind you that the upcoming hurricane season is expected to be particularly active. Your safety is our utmost priority, and we are committed to ensuring that everyone is well-prepared for any potential storms. Here are some important steps you can take to protect yourselves and your families:

Stay Informed: Keep up to date with weather forecasts and advisories from local authorities and trusted news sources. Sign up for emergency alerts if you haven't already.

Prepare an Emergency Kit: Ensure you have essential supplies such as non-perishable food, water, medications, flashlights, batteries, and a first aid kit. Don't forget necessary items for pets and any specific needs of your family members.

Know Your Evacuation Routes: Familiarize yourself with the local evacuation routes and the locations of nearby shelters.

Make a family emergency plan that includes meeting places and contacts.

Secure Your Home: Take steps to safeguard your home, such as securing outdoor furniture, ensuring windows are protected, and checking that your emergency exits are clear.

Follow Official Guidance: If an evacuation order is issued, please follow it promptly. Your cooperation is essential for your safety and that of your neighbors.

The Housing Authority team is here to support you. We will keep you informed of any critical updates and provide assistance as needed. Please reach out to our office at 305-296-5621 or email your property manager if you have any questions or need help with your preparations.

Let's work together to ensure a safe hurricane season. Thank you for your attention and cooperation.

In service,

Randy Sterling

“Winning is fun...Sure. But winning is not the point. Wanting to win is the point. Not giving up is the point. Never letting up is the point. Never being satisfied with what you've done is the point.”

- Pat Summitt, American women's college basketball head coach



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

David Woody (a.k.a. "Woody")
Director of Maintenance

Interview by Peter Batty



Woody is originally from Palm Beach County, Florida. He is a U.S. Navy Submarine Veteran and was stationed in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Woody moved to the Keys about 13 years ago and prior to working with the Key West Housing Authority, he was the Assistant Director of Maintenance at Hawks Cay Resort on Duck Key. He says that he enjoys Key West because the mornings and sunsets are wonderful, the variety of foods is excellent, the coffee is rich, and the atmosphere of Key West itself makes for an enjoyable day everyday.

How long have you been with the Housing Authority? Just over three years.

What position did you start with? I started as the Maintenance Superintendent.

What do you like about your job? I enjoy the daily challenges. Sometimes they can be frustrating, but when they get figured out and resolved, it's a very rewarding feeling.

Why would you recommend others think about starting a career at the Housing Authority? The Housing Authority has excellent benefits.

If you could travel to one place in the world, where would that be? Back to Hawaii. Or Japan. I loved Japan; Philippines was awesome, too.

If you could give your younger self one piece of advice, what would it be? Stay in the Navy!

FUN FACTS!

The 1st American President who served in the U.S. Navy was John F. Kennedy (who commanded the famous *PT-109* in World War II), followed by Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, & George H. W. Bush. Some notable former members of the Navy include U.S. Senators, Bob Kerrey, John McCain, & John Kerry, along with Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida, & Jesse Ventura, Governor of Minnesota.

Maximizing Savings:

How to Take Advantage of Sales Tax Holidays

Sales tax holidays offer an opportunity for savvy shoppers to save money by timing their purchases to coincide with designated periods where specific items are exempt from sales tax. These holidays are set by the state, providing a financial break on essential items like clothing, footwear, school supplies, tools, and disaster preparedness items. By strategically planning your shopping, you can keep more money in your pocket!

Sales tax holidays are short-term periods, usually lasting 1 to 4 weeks, during which sales tax is waived on certain categories of goods. The amount you save during a sales tax holiday depends on your location and the items you purchase. For instance, let's consider Monroe County with a sales tax rate of 7.5%. Here's how much you can save on clothing and footwear during a tax-free period:

- Clothing: If you purchase \$200 worth of clothing, you save \$15 in sales tax.
- Footwear: Buying \$150 worth of shoes saves you \$11.25 in sales tax.

Here's a table to illustrate the savings for different purchase amounts:

Purchase Amount	Tax Savings at 7.5%
\$50	\$3.75
\$100	\$7.5
\$150	\$11.25
\$200	\$15.00



Tips for Maximizing Savings

1. Plan Ahead: Mark the sales tax holiday dates on your calendar and make a list of items you need to purchase. This will help you stay focused and avoid impulse buys.
2. Know the Rules: Check the specific rules for each holiday, like limits on the cost per item that qualifies for the exemption. For example, an item of clothing during the Back to School tax holiday needs to be \$100 or less to be tax-exempt.
3. Combine with Other Discounts: Sales tax holidays often coincide with other sales or seasonal discounts. Combining these promotions can lead to substantial savings.
4. Stock Up on Essentials: Use this time to buy necessities that you will need throughout the year, such as school supplies, basic clothing, cat & dog food, and batteries. This way, you save on taxes and also reduce future shopping trips!



Sales tax holidays are a valuable opportunity for consumers to save money on essential items. By planning purchases around these tax-free periods, understanding the rules, and combining the savings with other discounts, shoppers can significantly reduce their expenses. Whether you're buying school supplies for the kids or updating your wardrobe, timing your purchases to align with sales tax holidays can make a big difference in your budget. Happy shopping!

GOOD TO KNOW!

Tropic Cinema has kicked off its summer movie series for children and their families. The movies will be shown every Thursday at 10 a.m. The tickets are \$2 per person. The summer movie series is sponsored by the Key West Women's Club. Tropic Cinema is located at 416 Eaton Street.



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, & landlords by employing and retaining a highly qualified and well-trained staff that supports its mission.

Current Employment Openings (as of 06/20/2024):

- HCV Dept. Assistant (F/T)
- Housing Assistant (F/T)
- Housing Manager (F/T)
- HVAC Maintenance Mechanic (F/T)
- Maintenance Mechanic (F/T)
- Receptionist (P/T)

How To Apply:

To apply for a position with the Key West Housing Authority, 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@kwha.org

Via Postal or Hand Delivery:

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

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

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

- ◆ Replaced the roof of the pavilion in the courtyard at SCP.
- ◆ Ordered major tree trimmings at most properties in preparation of storm season.
- ◆ Implemented a revised Emergency Operations Plan to incorporate the latest best practices, lessons learned from recent emergencies, updated contact & resource lists, & coordination protocols with local, state, & federal agencies.
- ◆ Continued work on preparing for the installation of a new whole-building generator at SCP (delivery expected 10/2024).
- ◆ Worked with the MCLA and the City of Key West to secure funding for the construction of new units at Poinciana Plaza.
- ◆ Awarded several cash scholarships to high school graduating residents of KWHHA.
- ◆ Installed six new desktop computers and one new printer in the resident computer lab located at Lang Milian Apartments.

RESIDENT ACTIVITIES & OPPORTUNITIES

WITH MR. GARY



"The more that you read, the more things you will know, the more that you learn, the more places you'll go ." - Dr. Seuss

KEY WEST HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS LIVING IN HOUSING AUTHORITY COMMUNITIES AWARDED SCHOLARSHIPS SPONSORED BY HOUSING AUTHORITY & GULF ATLANTIC BANK

(Scholarship winners standing next to Mr. Gary - left to right in picture.)

Natalie Arguello earned a 4.23 GPA. Natalie will pursue her Nursing degree at University of Central Florida. She plans to enroll in the Reserve Officer Training Program and hopes to serve in Air Force Reserve as a Combat Rescue Officer.

Jasmin Cisneros Montes earned a 3.32 GPA. She will begin her educational journey with an Associate Degree at the College of the Florida Keys after which she aspires to become an elementary school teacher.

Detra Saila Dor earned a 3.7 GPA. She will earn her BA in Political Science and Public Administration and she aspires to continue her education at law school.

Dazmine Jenkins earned a 3.95 GPA. Eleven universities offered her admission. Dazmine says her mom is an incredible role model and the driving force behind Dazmine's ambitions.

Eliany De La Caridad Leal-Espinosa earned a 3.5 GPA. She will attend Florida State University, where she will Major in Psychology and earn a Minor in Business.

Christopher Joel Hernandez Nunez earned a 3.85 GPA. He will attend Florida Polytechnic University and aspires to study Artificial Intelligence using emerging computer hardware technology.

Carlos Manuel Aliz Rodriguez earned a 3.84 GPA. He will attend Santa Fe College and aspires to become a Civil Engineer.



Attention Parents with children ages 6 to 11 years old:

FREE Summer Camp scholarships are available, including Art Camp, History Camp & Coral Camp, while they last, from our generous community partners at the Key West Art & Historical Society and Reef Relief. First come first served! Call Mr. Gary (305) 304-5568

Visit the Monroe County Sheriff's Office Animal Farm free of charge the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month from 1 – 3 pm at the Sheriff's Office Headquarters on College Rd. For more info, call (305) 293-7300.



Attention Residents of Senior Citizen Plaza & Jack T. Murray Senior Complex: Our community partner, Monroe County Social Services, is providing transportation to the Publix and Winn Dixie shopping centers. Please speak to your Housing Manager for details, and sign up by calling Mr. Gary! (305) 304-5568

Congratulations to all our Seniors! We wish you the BEST in your educational endeavors!

Gary Young Contact Info

Email: youngg@kwha.org
Telephone: (305) 304-5568

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