

FALL 2024
Volume 3, Issue 3

THE Key Wester

a seasonal newsletter for residents of the



HOUSING AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF KEY WEST, FLORIDA

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Message from the ED	2
Employee Spotlight	2
Fun For Seniors—Concerts and Monster Bash	3
Good to Know!	3
Pest Control Schedule	4
Looking Back	4
Mr. Gary's Corner	4

IMPORTANT DATES

Rosh Hashanah	—October 3
Yom Kippur	—October 12
Columbus Day	—October 14 (KWAH Offices Closed)
Diwali	—October 31
Halloween	—October 31
Daylight Savings Time Ends	—November 3
Veterans Day	—November 11 (KWAH Offices Closed)
Thanksgiving Day	—November 28 (KWAH Offices Closed)
Day after Thanksgiving	—November 29 (KWAH Offices Closed)
Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	—Dec 7



Pictured above: KWAH Commissioner Annette Mobley, MCHA Commissioner Linda Hinchcliffe, County Commissioner David Rice, MCHA Chairman Aaron Castillo, County Mayor Holly Merrill Raschein, MCHA Commissioner William Gonzalez, KWAH Chairman Johnny Parks, and KWAH/MCHA Executive Director Randy Sterling.

Monroe County Housing Authority (MCHA) Cuts the Ribbon on New Affordable Housing

On August 7th, the MCHA officially opened Conch Cove on Conch Key, a housing development of eight 1-bedroom / 1-bathroom and two 2-bedroom / 1-bathroom single-family homes located at 18 North Conch Avenue, Conch Key. The waitlist for this property is now open. Applications may be submitted at cityofkeywest.housingmanager.com. To qualify for this 1 and 2-bedroom unit property, the household must not exceed two people for the one-bedroom and four people for the two-bedroom at the time of admission. Maximum annual income limits apply.

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
General Election is **Oct. 2nd**
Election day:
Tuesday, November 5



HISTORICAL REMEMBRANCE

In 1982, the US Border Patrol set up a roadblock and inspection point on US 1 just south of Florida City. Vehicles leaving the FL Keys were stopped and searched for illegal drugs and undocumented immigrants. This created a traffic jam of 17 miles. The Key West City Council complained about the inconvenience for travelers to and from Key West, claiming that it hurt the Keys' vital tourism industry. When the complaints

went unanswered by the U.S. federal government and attempts to obtain an injunction against the roadblock were unsuccessful, Mayor Dennis Wardlow and the council declared Key West's independence on April 23, 1982. In the eyes of the council, since the U.S. federal government had set up the equivalent of a border station as if they were a foreign nation, they might as well become one, and the micronation took the name of the Conch Republic. T-shirts, flags, beach towels, and other products representing the Conch Republic are still popular today, and the Conch Republic Independence Celebration is celebrated every year, on April 23.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Residents,

I hope this message finds you and your loved ones safe and well. As you know, Hurricane Helene passed by our community recently. Thankfully, we were fortunate that the storm did not cause significant damage to our properties, and we have not encountered any major disruptions to essential services.

While we are relieved by this outcome, we remain committed to ensuring that everyone is safe and secure. Our maintenance and response teams have been conducting thorough assessments of all our buildings and grounds to identify any minor damage that may need attention. If you notice anything that requires repair, please don't hesitate to contact our

maintenance office immediately. This is important because even the smallest maintenance item can grow into something much more serious in a short amount of time.

We will continue to keep you informed during this 2024 hurricane season. Unfortunately, we're not officially "out of the woods" until November 30th. In the meantime, please stay safe and reach out if you need assistance.

Thank you for your continued trust and resilience.

In service,

Randy Sterling



Self-control is strength; Right thought is mastery; Calmness is power. Say unto your heart, "Peace, be still!"

- from author [James Allen](#)'s 1903 [book](#), "As a Man Thinketh."



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Janessa Giannetto
Occupancy & Admissions Supervisor

Interview by Peter Batty

Janessa was born and raised in Key West, and she has lived her entire life in the Keys except for her time in college and a few years working on the mainland.

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

What position did you start with? I started as an Occupancy & Admissions Assistant.

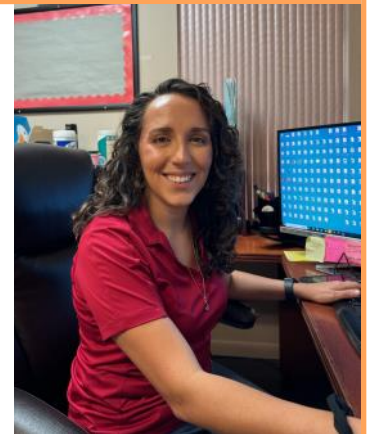
What do you like about your job? I like being able to help the community because the Housing Authority makes it possible for people to stay in the Keys. I really enjoy my interactions with the applicants and residents and the staff in my department are wonderful to work with.

Where do you live? I live on Big Coppitt with my significant other, Steven Sellers, who's also a Conch. Steven is a chef at Dolphin Deli, and he details boats and still does some commercial fishing.

What are your hobbies and what do you like to do in your spare time? I like boating, fishing, exercising and just hanging out with our friends.

Do you have a favorite restaurant? Actually, I have two favorite restaurants. We go to Santiago's Bodega and to Miso Happy. I happen to just love Sushi.

If you could change anything about Key West, what would it be? I know it is expensive to live anywhere these days, but it seems that Key West has gotten crazy lately, it makes it difficult for people to live here. I am glad that the Housing Authority is continuing to build more units, and I hope we can keep it up, our community needs more affordable and workforce housing.





Impromptu Classical Concerts is giving free admission to our seniors during the 2025 Concert series beginning in January 2025.

For more information go online to

<https://www.keywestimpromptu.org/>

To register for free admission call Mr. Gary at (305) 304-5568.



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 10/02/2024):

- Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director (F/T)
- HCV Dept. Assistant (F/T)
- Maintenance Mechanic (F/T)
- Resident Care Supervisor (F/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



ATTENTION: Residents of Senior Citizen Plaza & Jack T. Murray Senior Complex

Calling all ghouls, ghosts, and goblins of the golden years! It's time to dust off your broomsticks and join us for a celebration full of fun, laughter, and just the right amount of spookiness!

Date: Friday, October 25TH
Time: 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Where: Auditorium at Senior Citizen Plaza

Come dressed in your favorite costume or come as you are – either way, you'll be in for a treat to lively music, dancing, and snacks. We can't wait to celebrate this hauntingly fun evening with you!



GOOD TO KNOW!

The Monroe County Public Library at 700 Fleming Street in Key West offers Computer Classes every Tuesday & Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.! Topics include Basic Microsoft Word & Resume Formatting. Stop by their front desk or call 305-292-3595 to sign up for an upcoming class.

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.

Attn: High School Seniors!!!

Your senior year! Wow, what an accomplishment! Is this the beginning of your education?

Remember to apply for scholarships if you are planning to pursue vocational training or go to college next year.

The Housing Authority has scholarship opportunities for student tenants who live in our communities, & together with our community partners we remind students preparing for a career in nursing to apply for the Knight Foundation 2025 Nursing Scholarships!

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

LOOKING BACK

There was no slowing down this summer for us at the Housing Authority! Below are just a few of the exciting things that happened the past few months:

- ◆ Replaced the roof of the rental office and laundry room at Senior Citizen Plaza.
- ◆ Completed major tree trimmings at most properties in preparation of storm season.
- ◆ Replaced the 27-ton rooftop condenser at the Poinciana Gardens Senior Living Complex.
- ◆ Continued work on preparing for the installation of a new whole-building generator at Senior Citizen Plaza (delivery expected by the end of the year).
- ◆ Worked with an architect on design of new units at Poinciana Plaza.
- ◆ Conducted two resident meetings, one at Robert Gabriel Site C & one at Senior Citizen Plaza, and underwent a HUD inspection of 590 public housing units.
- ◆ Procured a contractor to provide complete rehabilitation of a fire unit at Roosevelt Gardens.

RESIDENT ACTIVITIES & OPPORTUNITIES

WITH MR. GARY

“You have to get your education. Then nobody can control your destiny,”

Charles Barkley, American former basketball



After School program



May we help you? Parents, please call me to schedule your Open House classroom visit! Mr. Gary (305) 304-5568

Our After School program is FREE for student residents at Lang Milian, George Allen, Robert Gabriel and Fort Village Apartments. We meet after school on Mondays and Wednesdays during the school year and during holidays. We are here to help children with homework, reading and math. Check out our NEW computer lab for school projects! Free-play activities include our large collection of games and books and we even offer a healthy snack program.

Call Mr. Gary TODAY! at (305) 304-5568 and schedule a visit to our classroom at Building 13-G, Lang Milian Apartments, 301 White Street near the new playground!



Gary Young Contact Info

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

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

“The more time you spend contemplating what you should have done...you lose valuable time planning what you can and will do.” – Lil Wayne, American rapper