

Housing Herald

The Voice of Niagara Regional Housing & Communities



News & Information for Social Housing Tenants

September 2002

Property Operations Division is Relocating!

Our offices at 55 King St. in St. Catharines are *CLOSING PERMANENTLY* on September 15th, 2002. Administrative, support services, maintenance, rent calculations and rental payments will be relocating to our new office at 3340 Schmon Parkway.

During the relocation, the *Property Operations Division offices will be CLOSED from SEPTEMBER 12 & 13, 2002.*

During this time, emergency service may be obtained by contacting the answering service at (905) 734-2363.

Once the relocation is complete, service for all your property management and maintenance requirements will be available by calling our current office numbers (located on pg. 2). You can continue to pay your rent by mail,

drop boxes, post-dated cheques, or in person at our new office at 3340 Schmon Pkwy. If you are not already one of the majority who use the convenience of pre-authorized rent payments, we encourage you to do so. You can contact your Property Manager for more information.

We apologize for any inconvenience and thank you for your patience during this time. We look forward to helping you at our new location!

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Important Contact Information

Co-ordinated Housing Access

479D Carlton St.
St. Catharines, ON
L2M 4Y6
(905) 935-7645
1-800-391-4644

Administrative Division

3340 Schmon Pkwy
Thorold, ON
L2V 3Z3
(905)682-9201

Property Operations Division

3340 Schmon Pkwy
Thorold, ON
L2V 3Z3
(905)682-9201
1-800-232-3292

Maintenance

3340 Schmon Pkwy
Thorold, ON
L2V 3Z3
(905)682-1755

Overhoused Tenants

On April 1, 2002 Niagara Regional Housing began its operation. With that came changes to many policies and procedures with one of the major changes affecting tenants that are overhoused.

Overhoused tenants are those that have more bedrooms than are required for the number of people living in their home.

Moving overhoused tenants to the proper size unit has been *established as a priority by the Social Housing Reform Act 2000.*

When a unit becomes available in one of our communities, any

The tenant may choose the communities they wish to be on the waiting list for. If the tenant refuses to go on the list or asks to be removed from the list, their rent will be raised to market. Also, a tenant will have to pay market rent, if they refuse three offers of housing after being placed on the centralized waiting list.

If you are a recently overhoused tenant or if you were an overhoused tenant at one time but that is no longer the case, you need to update your file to be sure the changes have been made.

If you have not already done this, please contact your Rent Clerk at 905-682-9201.



tenants who are overhoused will be offered that unit before contacting applicants on the centralized waiting list.

Overhoused tenants are made a maximum of three offers of accommodation in an appropriate sized unit. If the tenant refuses the third offer, they would no longer qualify for subsidized housing and their rent would be increased to market rent.

Overhoused tenants are placed on Niagara Regional Housing's internal waiting list for a period of one year.

Should the household still be overhoused after the one-year has passed, and have not had three offers, the household will then be placed on the centralized waiting list.

You have the right to Appeal

Niagara Regional Housing has developed an appeal process in consultation with the Tenant Advisory Council. The Appeal process is consistent with the requirements of the *Social Housing Reform Act 2000.*

The types of decisions that are subject to appeal include the following:

For tenants requesting to move to another community:

- *Refusal to place an applicant on the waiting list;*



Thanks a bunch!

The tenants of 6858 and 6868 Ailanthus Avenue in Niagara Falls have done a wonderful job of beautifying the buildings by planting and maintaining flowers in the newly renovated flower beds.

It really makes the buildings look welcoming.

As usual, Mr. Peck has done a fantastic job at the vegetable garden.

The produce looks and tastes great!

Thanks for sharing the harvest.

- *Refusal to give applicant Special Priority status (Victim of Family Violence);*
- *Refusal to give applicant Health & Safety Priority status;*
- *Cancelling an application;*
- *Refusal to offer a unit.*

Other situations affecting Tenants:

- *Placing a tenant on the overhoused waiting list;*
- *Removing RGI (Rent Geared to Income) subsidy;*
- *Unresolved dispute over RGI Calculation;*
- *Unresolved dispute over a rent deferral agreement.*

An appeal committee consisting of three people who were not involved in the original decision will hear the appeal and their decision will be final. Tenants should bring any **new** relevant information and may be accompanied by a friend, lawyer, advocate or relative.

Appeal Process

Tenants who wish to appeal a decision must do so within 10 business days of receiving notice of the decision.

The request for the **Review** must be in writing and signed. Please ensure that your name, address and phone number are printed clearly.

The **Review** will be completed within 10 business days from receipt of the request to review, (within 5 business days if the request involves inclusion in the Special Priority category)

Written notice of the decision will be provided to the tenant within 5 business days of the Review.

Tenants have an **opportunity to comment** on information received from a third party.

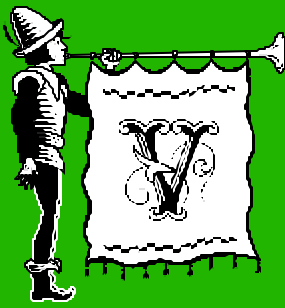
- *Tenant will receive a letter stating the proposed decision;*
- *Tenant has 30 days to comment on the information;*
- *The comments will be reviewed and a decision will be made;*
- *A written notice of the decision will be issued within 7 business days.*

If the tenant wishes to appeal the decision they have the right to request a review.

Any Tenant Group, formal or informal, are welcome to submit articles.

Please contact your *Community Programs Co-ordinator* at 905-935-7645 for more information.





We need you!

Niagara Regional Housing Tenant Advisory Committee

Each month the committee travels to different housing communities. If your community would like to host a meeting please contact Cherie.

The role of the committee is to provide feedback on current Niagara Regional Housing policies. The committee discusses policy changes and the impact on tenants. Childcare costs and transportation are provided to voting members.

We currently need tenants from Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, Niagara-on-the-Lake, and Port Colborne.

For more information or an application call Cherie at 905-935-7645 ext 15.

Community News

561 Steele Street

*Mary Margaret Wegrich
"Happy Gang Social Club"*

We are a newly assembled club that was formed at the beginning of 2002. Within this club we have an Executive, Kitchen group, Decorating, Social Committee, a sunshine girl and most of all, a great bunch of tenants that help make this work. Our Executive meets with the tenants the last Monday of every month followed by a party celebrating birthdays for that month.

Our "Sunshine Girl" sends "Get Well" cards to tenants who may be in the Hospital or not feeling well at home and informs other tenants of the situation.

Our Kitchen Committee is extremely busy and is always creating special meals that are tantalizing to the taste buds.

Once a month, Meals on Wheels holds a Diner's Club in the building.

We held a Pizza Night, Hot Chili Night and a winter B.B.Q. (with "Chef John" barbecuing following a snow storm), a soup night, Fish and Chip night, and a special Hungarian Chicken Dinner night that was superb.



We have made extra money for our club through the dinners and sales of Cabbage Rolls and Cream Pies. We raffled a crocheted doll,

donated by Joan Dafoe, and raised \$242.

All those who are interested can join us every Tuesday evening and take a walk through the park at the back of the Seniors Centre. It's a good way to get fresh air, a little exercise and get to know each other a little better.

A Yard Sale was held Saturday, June 8th with 557 Steele joining us.

On Monday July 8th, 561 and 557 tenants and friends went on a bus trip to Midland for a 2 ½ hour boat cruise which also included a full course chicken dinner, and took in the beauty of the 30,000 islands, Also included in this trip was a stop at the Martyr's Shrine.

The tenants have been very generous in their giving, not only in material ways but in giving of themselves. This club could not survive without each and every one of you!

What a wonderful building to reside in and how lucky we are to have such a residence provided for us. Let's show everyone how much we appreciate everything we have here and keep up the good work!

Executives for 2002

President - Beulah Fokkens

Secretary - Mary Margaret Wegrich

Treasurer - Donna McDermid

Community Programs Co-ordinators

are available to tenants to help resolve issues in the community, support Tenant Associations and provide support & facilitation to tenants wishing to start a new tenant association, link tenants with support services that may be needed and work closely with Property Managers in resolving community issues.

Community Programs Co-ordinators

Deborah Firmin:
905-935-7645
ext. 23
Port Colborne
Welland, Niagara Falls (excluding 5130 Portage Road & Westfield Court)
Fort Erie
Niagara-on-the-Lake

Melissa Spyker:
905-935-7645
ext. 24
St. Catharines
Niagara Falls (5130 Portage Road & Westfield Court)
Thorold, Grimsby
Beamsville

Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to call.

211 King Street

Joanna Barnes

Greetings to all from 211 King Street in Welland. Well, the Rose City is living up to it's name with flowers everywhere.

Here in our building, our resident gardener, Theresa Cajko, has worked her magic with a little plot of ground. Needless to say, her hard work paid off in beautifying the building and we really appreciate it. Thanks a million Theresa.



We took a break from Bingo and Euchre for the summer but will begin again in September. The Strawberry Social at the end of June was successful and delicious. We had a Barbecue in July and a Corn Roast in August.

Those of us who went tripping saw 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat' at Stage West in Toronto. Also in July, was another favorite, the "Grand River Tour." Many tenants went to Casino Rama in August.

We are, for the most part, an active happy group of people here at 211 King Street and we enjoy socializing with each other whenever and wherever we can.

Our Senior Club, under the capable direction of the executive, headed by Mariette Yates, is always looking for ways to improve the enjoyment of the tenants and we thank them for their hard work.

If you're in our neighborhood on a Monday afternoon come and join us for a little Bingo. Bye for now.....

Rykert Street

Norma MacLean

Thank you tenants of the Rykert Street complex for voting us as the executive of the Rykert Tenant Association.

Since taking over we have had Darma's Delicious Dinners every 2nd Saturday, Movie Nights on Fridays for the children and a Library and Craft Night every other Thursday.

We had a Pot Luck Supper with Brighter Futures and a Barbecue and Dance. Thank you for all the fireworks donations. The children had a great time. Our bake sale was a great success and many thanks to all of you who participated.

Our Easter Egg Hunt was successful because of the generosity of some of our local businesses: Avondale at 115 Carlton St. & 84 Pelham Rd.; Dollar Mart on 80 Pelham Rd.; Giant Tiger on Scott St.; Loony Lizard on 100 Fourth Ave.; Shoppers Drug Mart on Fourth Ave. & at Pelham Rd. Clinic; Word of Life Church on Scott St.; Angus, the Baker from Terri's Café on Pelham Rd. and all of St. Catharines.

The Centre has recently been re-decorated. Thank you to Al and Ann Gurman, John Batt and Cassie Dobie for all your hard work. All the children that come to the centre will have the chance to put their handprints on the wall and we will sign their names underneath.

Thank you Brighter Futures for donating the television. We purchased a V.C.R, and are now able to have Movie Nights for the children.



St. Catharines TAC

Do you live in St. Catharines? Are you looking for a way of becoming involved in your community? Currently Niagara Regional Housing is looking for representatives to sit on their St. Catharines Tenant Advisory Council. This council provides a unique opportunity for St. Catharines tenants to be involved in a variety of activities. Currently, the St. Catharines Association works out of "Everybody's Place" at 45 Manchester Avenue.

Examples of activities that have taken place include monthly meetings, Christmas bazaars, Children's Programs and fundraisers. The association needs members in order for it to thrive and continue to play a role in the communities.

If interested, please contact Melissa Spyker, Community Programs Co-ordinator at 905-935-7645 ext. 24.

St. Catharines TAC

Sharon Summers

I was asked to do this letter to let you know how important it is to have a Tenant Advisory Council.

As you know I have been the Chairperson for a number of years, I have recently resigned from my position. I want everyone to know that it has been very rewarding for me. I not only met people but have gained a lot of friends which I will miss dearly.

I want everyone to know that our committee was very unique. It was made up of service providers, tenants and housing staff. We started out with elections and then formed a committee.

A Resource Centre was supplied for us at 45 Manchester and the unit was remodeled to suit our needs. The Centre has been used for meetings, fundraisers, Christmas bazaars, Children's Programs and for people to gather.

We had a contest to name the Resource Centre and with the tenants help chose Everybody's Place. It has a special place in my heart because it holds a lot of memories past and present.

I am asking tenants to get involved with this committee. If no one shows an interest the Resource Centre will be closed.

Do you really want to see this happen?

Your children have the right to use this Centre for activities, don't let his happen.

If tenants could put their differences aside and work together it would be great, so think about it.

Please call Melissa at (905) 935-7645 Ext. 24 if you are interested.

As the former Chairperson I would like to say thank you to all who sat on my committee, staff and tenants.

We all worked very hard to make Everybody's Place a place to remember.

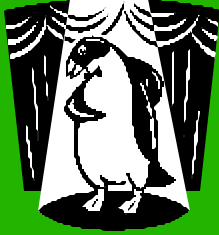
Stamford Court

Barbara Hannah

On the 3rd of May, a busload of noisy seniors departed Niagara Falls for Orillia to make it big! To boil the day into workable descriptions; beautiful day; good company; good time; Brinks escorts not required!

Canada Day celebrations were held on June 28th with plenty of red and white decorations. Canadian flags were hung proudly both inside and outside. Word games and outdoor activities were the order of the day. Ron Brown of the Friends of Stamford Centre was our guest, reminiscing on the 1930-50's in Niagara Falls. He especially mentioned the changes in Queen Street, the disappearance of the Cyanamid Pool and the changes in the Stamford Centre area. Jeanine Eade and her father, Andy (from Fort Erie) entertained us with a variety of music, both old and new.

Cont.....



BRAVO!

**SPECIAL NOTE
FROM THE
SENIORS AT
STAMFORD
COURT:**

Last fall, tenants, as a group, committed to making monthly donations to the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

We also have a monthly collection for Project Share. Those who wish, can make donations of non-perishable food. Fred Hannah sees that Project Share receives it.

Nova House, the Womens' shelter also receives our books and puzzles.

We are so proud of our Seniors. We are often painted as 'takers' and not 'givers'. This will disprove that notion.

Stamford Court

Cont....

A big vote of thanks to everyone who helped make our Canada Day celebrations one to remember!

September will see the resumption of: Monday night movies, Tuesday and Friday cards, Meals On Wheels family style dinners the first and fourth Wednesdays at noon, Thursday evening friendship group, monthly pot luck dinners and Saturday darts.

In October, Joan Robins and her Christmas elves will present the basket of suggested donations to be gathered for this years Christmas baskets'. We will deliver to two families again this year.

A BIG THANK YOU to Niagara Regional Housing for having our speed bumps installed. What a difference it makes!

We wish to extend a warm welcome to our new tenants and hope that they will join in some of the activities we provide. If you don't see your favorite activity listed, speak to Audrey Rustige and be prepared to organize your 'specialty'.



557 Steele Street

Velma Nobes

This summer has been comparatively uneventful for residents at 557 Steele Street.

We had our Canada Day BBQ with 24 people and are hoping to have another BBQ very soon, Barb Slow has done a wonderful job in keeping our flower gardens clean and looking good.

Thanks to Jim Jarvis for his efforts with the pruning and watering of the roses.

Thanks to Mervin Stuart for his carpentry skills!

Our Thursday night Euchre Club, Wednesday morning hour and monthly birthday parties have continued throughout the summer months.

We hope to be able to start our exercise program in September and also continue our musical entertainment evening with 'sing-along-with-Bob Beaudin, Tashene and Curt Huffman.

On behalf of all the residents who made the trip to Midland, we would like to thank John & Beulah Fokken for their part in planning the trip. We really enjoyed the day!

I would like to personally thank Deborah Firmin for accepting the place on the Port Colborne Transit Committee. She is working very hard on behalf of all the residents.

CAPC Niagara Brighter Futures

Community Action Program for Children
For families with young children under six years of age

Strong Families Make Healthy Children

Kids Club

Children grow through play
Come for fun programs for children and parents too

Local Planning Groups

Children grow when part of a healthy community
Be a part of making a difference in your neighborhood



Home Visits

Children grow in healthy homes
A Family Outreach Worker can provide support to you and your family in your own home

Nutrition

Children need adequate nutrition for healthy development
***Cooking Circles, Supper Clubs* and *Cooking with Kids* are fun programs where you can cook interesting meals on a budget**



Healthy Living Programs

Children need informed, confident parents
***Parenting, Anger Management* and *Coping* are just some of the workshops that you can join**

Multi-Cultural

Children grow through cultural pride
Arabic and Spanish are some of the other languages of our services

**For more information call:
905 - 714 - 0227**

**CAPC Niagara Brighter Futures
Helping Children Grow!**