

THE COMMUNITY

Quarterly Newsletter of The Housing Authority of McDonough County



Fitch Manor New Siding

Honoring Women's History Month

March is Women's History Month — a time to recognize the strength, resilience, and contributions of women past and present. From mothers and grandmothers to teachers, caregivers, leaders, and neighbors, women help shape families and communities every day, often in ways that go unseen.

This month is also about uplifting one another. Small acts of kindness, sharing support, and simply listening can build stronger, healthier communities. When women support women, powerful things happen.

It's also a reminder to care for yourself. Many women carry heavy responsibilities and put their own needs last, but rest and self-care are important. Taking time for your health and well-being is not selfish — it helps you stay strong for yourself and those around you.

This March, honor the women who inspire you — and remember, your strength, voice, and story matter. Together, women continue to make history every day

Important Dates:

Dates in black = Office Closed

March 8th- Spring Ahead Clocks

March 17th- St. Patrick's Day

March 20th- First Day of Spring

April 1st- April Fool's Day

April 3rd- Good Friday

April 5th- Easter

May 10th- Mother's Day

May 25th- Memorial Day

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Spring 2026

A Message from the Executive Director.

Hello everyone! I hope you are well. As I write this, the cold front has moved past us and we're all looking forward to warmer weather! You know Mother Nature, she may still sneak a little more winter in, but we're getting there. Sunday March 8th is the end of Daylight Savings Time and that means we SPRING BACK and we set our clocks back one hour before we go to bed on March 7th. The first day of Spring is March 20th!

When I wrote my Fall newsletter article, I mentioned the new siding project at Fitch Manor. Well, it's done and as predicted, it is beautiful! Next up is siding replacement at Greenbriar Apartments. That project has been pushed back to mid-summer, due to budgeting constraints at HUD. The cost estimate for that project is over 1.2 million dollars! Therefore, the back surrounds will not be replaced at this time. The back patio areas will all be cleaned up and junk trees will be removed, etc. All total, the Housing Authority will invest over \$3,000,000 in siding replacements so please PLEASE do not nail anything to the siding. Anything nailed to the siding will be removed and the resident will receive a warning for damaging federal property and will be charged for any repairs due to damage to the siding.

In this newsletter, Ms. Kali has addressed some common problems that we encounter on a regular basis. I need to add two. PETS. Pets (dogs and cats) may not be moved in without prior permission. There are rules and regulations in your dwelling lease and the pet policy that was provided to you at move in. Note: The attachments are considered a part of the dwelling lease. ALL PETS MUST BE PRE-APPROVED. Please don't make the manager be the bad guy who must issue you a lease termination notice and require you to remove a loved pet because the rules weren't followed to bring in the pet in the first place. That's not fair to anyone, especially the pet! Please remember that only warm-blooded animals are permitted. No snakes or reptiles. Abandoned pets will be promptly removed from the unit and taken to the McDonough County Animal Shelter.

Secondly, WORK ORDERS. All work orders must be called into your property office. The maintenance technicians are not allowed to take your work order. They must all be called in so they can be recorded. Also remember, your lease requires you to call in any repair that needs to be done in your apartment. Most work is done for free, or at a minimal cost. That includes pests! Please report any bugs you may see – even if it's "just" one. Pest control is provided at no cost to you. Need cleaning supplies, but you can't afford them? Just ask! We'll be happy to set you up. Failure to report damage or pests within the home is a lease violation that can lead to adverse action.

I hope you're feeling good today. Going through winter can be so hard on us. Try to treat yourself to something nice today. Give yourself a pat on your back when you do something good – even if it's folding some laundry or making your children lunch. That's what I do! Sometimes I keep a list of compliments that I've received to remind me that I'm doing OK. You're doing OK too. Celebrate yourself today!

Best,

Annette



Tenant Incident Reports

We care about keeping our community safe and peaceful for everyone. When issues or disagreements arise between tenants, please complete a Tenant Incident Report. While we truly want to help, our team may not always be available to discuss situations in person. Incident reports ensure your concerns are properly documented and addressed in a timely manner. Thank you for helping us keep our community running smoothly!

Spring Cleaning

As spring arrives, it brings the perfect opportunity for a fresh start at home. Over time, clutter can build up in our living spaces, and a cluttered home can often lead to a cluttered mind—making it harder to relax, focus, and feel at ease. Spring cleaning doesn't have to be overwhelming or perfect to make a difference. Start small, take your time, and remind yourself that progress matters more than perfection. Even organizing one drawer, clearing one surface, or tidying one corner can help create a calmer, more comfortable space.

Another helpful step is to sort items into simple categories: keep, donate, toss, or relocate. Letting go of things you no longer use can create more room for peace and organization. Try setting a timer for 15–20 minutes and clean until it goes off—small sessions can add up quickly without feeling exhausting. Celebrate each bit of progress, no matter how small, and remember that creating a comfortable home is a process, not a race. Focus on the areas you use most, open windows for fresh air when weather allows, and let go of items you no longer need. Small steps can boost mood, reduce stress, and bring a sense of accomplishment. If you would like help getting started, residents are welcome to stop by the office to pick up a spring cleaning checklist, helpful tips, or community resources. We're here to support you as you refresh your home for the new season.



Step Into Sunshine!

As the days grow longer and the weather warms, spring offers a perfect chance to refresh both body and mind. After months spent indoors, many people notice their energy and mood begin to lift. Getting outside and soaking up fresh air and sunlight is a simple way to support mental health and overall wellness this season.

Spending time outdoors doesn't have to be complicated. Small, intentional steps—like a short walk, sitting on a porch, or opening windows—can help clear your mind and boost mood. Movement is key: walking, stretching, or gardening releases endorphins, your body's natural "feel-good" chemicals, improving energy, sleep, and stress management. Sunlight also plays an important role in health. Natural light helps your body produce vitamin D, which supports bones, immune function, and emotional balance. Opening curtains or spending a few minutes outside can make a noticeable difference in how you feel.

Connection matters too. Greeting neighbors, spending time with family, or simply chatting with a friend helps reduce isolation and strengthen your sense of community. Even brief outdoor interactions can improve your mood and create a stronger sense of belonging.

Spring is also a great time to refresh your home and routines. Bringing a little of the outdoors inside—opening windows, arranging fresh flowers, or creating a small garden space—can extend the benefits of nature throughout your day. Pairing outdoor activity with mindful breathing or quiet reflection can enhance focus and relaxation, helping you feel more balanced and energized. Spending time in green spaces or near trees has even been shown to lower blood pressure and reduce stress, making outdoor time a simple yet powerful wellness tool.

Finally, give yourself grace. Some days you'll feel energized, others may call for rest—and that's okay. Taking time to step outside this spring supports both your body and mind, helping you build healthy habits and a brighter outlook for the seasons ahead. Remember, even a few minutes outside each day can make a big difference in how you feel and set the tone for a happier, healthier spring.

Community Garden

Please do not plant garden crops like tomatoes, pumpkins, or other produce in the grass near your unit. These areas must stay clear for maintenance, landscaping, and curb appeal. If you'd like to garden, there are designated community garden spaces available. Reach out to your property manager for details.



Food Assistance

Salvation Army- (309) 837-4824
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 10a - 1p

Loaves and Fishes

Tuesdays- 10a -12p and 2p - 4p

The Crossing Food Pantry- (309) 836-7870

Thursdays- 5p - 6p (Drive up only)

Good Food Pantry- (309) 313-2049

Tuesdays and Thursday- 1p - 5p

Health and Hope Food Pantry- (309) 883-3018

1st and 3rd Tuesdays (6p - 7p) and Saturdays (9a - 10a)



Community Garden

Residents are welcome to grow their own produce by using the free community garden located behind PrairieView on E. Wheeler St. Signing up for a garden plot is a great way to enjoy fresh produce, stay active, and save money on groceries.



Call today to apply for a plot!
(309) 833-4747



Mineral, Jewelry, and Fossil Show

March 14th & March 15th

10AM - 5PM

WIU Ballroom

Free admission and parking.

There will be dealers, demonstrators, kid's activities, silent auctions, geode cracking, and other activities! Some activities are free.



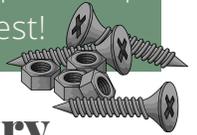
Smoking in Units

Smoking is not allowed anywhere inside our apartments, buildings, or within 25 feet of them. This includes cigarettes, vapes, hookahs, and marijuana. Even though marijuana is legal in Illinois, our property follows federal rules, so it is strictly prohibited. Please help keep our community healthy, safe, and clean by following all smoke-free guidelines.



New Siding

Please do not drill, screw, or mount anything into the siding of your unit. Prairieview has brand-new siding, and Fitch Manor's updates are underway. This work was a major investment, and we want it to stay in great shape for years to come. Damaging the siding may result in repair charges, so help us keep our buildings looking their best!



Mobile Food Pantry

April 24th- Eisenhower Tower

May 29th- Fitch Manor

July 24th- Praireview Townhomes

August 28th- Greenbriar Apartments



Respecting Our Neighbors

As the temperatures warm up and more people begin spending time outside, please remember to be respectful of your neighbors and mindful of noise levels. Observing quiet hours helps everyone enjoy a peaceful and comfortable community.

