University Housing Newsletter, December 2012

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University Housing Newsletter

The University Housing Newsletter is a monthly publication of the department for staff members. It is YOUR news - you are encouraged to contribute articles or information to share with the department.

To contribute an article to the newsletter, email the entire article by the 25th of each month to Kent Perrodin at kperrod@uark.edu.

Articles will be reviewed for content and may be edited for publishing.

Photos provided by Bill Finley and Becky Clark

Elvis the Elf took the Finance Office under surveillance in December. Though Bill Finley was under the most scrutiny (probably for very good reasons) nobody was safe from Elvis’ watchful eye!
Responsibility is one of the core characteristics of any successful community. Judy DeGonia, our Service Assistant in Gregson Hall, noticed the men living on the third floor of Gregson are above average when it comes to being responsible for their living area! Several times Judy noticed the trash in the third floor bathroom had been pulled and properly disposed of by the time she began her daily cleaning tasks.

In appreciation of the care they have taken and the respect and appreciation the men have shown her she made them a tub full of various muffins. I was in Gregson Hall the day she provided the muffins and spoke with a couple of the young men. Their response to me, “She’s the greatest!”

Thank you, Judy, for being an example of a dedicated and caring employee.

Submitted for November Newsletter by Judy Kendrick

MODIFICATIONS TO GARLAND AVENUE SIDEWALK

Facilities Management started work to widen the sidewalk on Garland Avenue beginning near the southwest corner of Holcombe and extending to the intersection with Douglas Street.

The Garland Avenue entrance to Lot 30 is removed and new light poles and trees will line the upgraded sidewalk.

Information provided by Aaron England
Influenza Infections Widespread and Continuing to Rise in AR
It is not too late to get the flu shot!

In what is clearly the worst influenza season since 2009, the flu has hit early and hard. The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) is currently receiving large numbers of reports of influenza infections, hospitalizations, and intensive care unit admissions from all regions of the state and is already aware of seven deaths from the flu.

Currently in the US, 79.2% of the circulating influenza strains are Influenza A. Of those that are subtyped, 98% bear the H3N2 surface antigens and 2% bear the H1N1 antigens. Nearly all (99.3%) of the H3N2 strains and all of the H1N1 strains tested are well matched with the vaccine. Influenza B accounts for 20.8% of the circulating strains. Of those that are further characterized, 68.7% are well matched with the B component of the vaccine and 31.3% are not well matched. Overall the vaccine is well matched to roughly 90% of all current circulating strains.

No isolates of either Influenza A or B have shown resistance to neuraminidase inhibitor medications.

Only three cases of variant flu (novel influenza viruses from animal origin) have been reported nationally this season. None have occurred in Arkansas.

Amid the reports of illness are reports of people who have fallen ill despite receiving the seasonal flu immunization. In that regard, we have also heard rumors of doctors recommending that patients not get immunized because ‘it doesn’t work.’ These anecdotal reports are particularly concerning.

The ADH wholeheartedly recommends influenza vaccination for all eligible persons six months of age and older. It is very effective in preventing flu infections, hospitalizations, and deaths. Admittedly, it is not perfect and will not protect everyone – but it is the best tool we have. Protection from the vaccine depends on the recipient’s age and immune status and the type of vaccine. Overall, most influenza immunizations provide 60-80% protection against influenza infection. Similarly, they provide roughly 70-90% protection against influenza-related hospitalization.

In Arkansas, we expect approximately 1.5 million people to be vaccinated against the flu this season. If the vaccine keeps 80% of recipients from getting the flu, 1.2 million people would be protected and 300,000 would remain at risk of disease. So it is completely expected to see a minority of vaccinated people develop disease. When a vaccinated person develops the flu, it may be for a number of reasons, including:

1. People may be exposed to an influenza virus shortly before getting vaccinated or during the two-week period that it takes the body to gain protection after getting vaccinated. As a result, the person may become ill with the flu before the vaccine protected them.

2) A person may be exposed to an influenza virus that is not included in the seasonal flu vaccine. There are many different influenza viruses that circulate every year. Characterization of viruses collected this season in the United States indicates that 90% of the circulating viruses match the vaccine viruses; however, 10% of circulating viruses are likely not covered by the vaccine.

3) Unfortunately, some people can get infected with an influenza virus that is included in the vaccine despite getting vaccinated. In general, the flu vaccine works best among young, healthy adults and older children. Some older
people and people with certain chronic illnesses may fail to develop effective immunity after vaccination. While vaccination offers the best protection against influenza infection, it’s still possible that some individuals may become ill after being vaccinated.

As background, influenza typically is not a mild upper respiratory infection or cold. Instead, patients graphically describe the onset of the flu as ‘getting hit by a bus.’ This is because the generalized muscle aches associated with the flu can be severe. Classic symptoms also include cough, high fever, headache, and malaise. In children influenza symptoms can include vomiting or diarrhea. The symptoms typically last a week and may last longer.

Persons who develop disease after vaccination often have milder symptoms or a shorter duration of illness and are much less likely to have a serious outcome, such as hospitalization or death from the flu than persons who were not vaccinated. The last thing we as doctors should be doing is to downplay the importance of flu vaccination. Flu immunization remains one of the most important and impactful public health and medical interventions that we have.

Yours sincerely,

Dirk Haselow MD, PhD
State Epidemiologist and Medical Director,
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Governor Mike Beebe
Paul K. Halverson, DrPH, FACHE, Director and State Health Officer

The University of Arkansas received the NACURH, INC (National Association of College and University Residence Halls) Regional Educational Program of the Month Award for November for No Woman Left Behind’s What Would You Do? program, held on September 29, 2012.

Based on the ABC program “Primetime: What Would You Do?” the program consisted of scenes depicting intoxicated students in a residence hall, a potential sexual assault about to occur, and someone stealing a purse from a female played out in several residence halls across campus. The chosen locations were to be well traveled but not heavily populated, as well as being a location were all students that were in the area could be debriefed before going about their evenings.

Once scenes were performed students who could have heard and/or seen the acts were surprisingly approached by a Student Success Advocate, a No Woman Left Behind intern and a No Woman Left Behind volunteer, to discuss the action that students did or did not take. Students were interviewed by the No Woman Left Behind intern and also informed at this time of the correct steps to take in intervening in situations such as the ones acted out. With the students’ permission some interviews were recorded by the No Woman Left Behind volunteers so that they may be used in future No Woman Left Behind trainings and events.

Considered a success, the program had a decent turn-out, created excellent dialogue with student “witnesses,” and generated interest by students to participate with this program in the future.

NWLB Intern Shanna Darling submitted the program for NACURH award consideration.

Submitted by Kerri Smith

The message is simple: whether it’s your sister, your friend, or a complete stranger step in and make a difference.
CONGRATULATIONS RECENT SUPERVISOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GRADUATES

Grant Carlson  Mira Milanova

Kathy Thielen  Melissa Vergara

Congratulations to University Housing’s graduates of the Fall 2012 Supervisor Development Program!

Photo Submitted by Jeff Vinger

Elvis Strikes Again!
2012 Night Market

On the evening of Thursday, November 29, Holcombe Hall’s living room was transformed into an international marketplace. Modeled after traditional Asian shops held after dark, Night Market was initiated by Holcombe Hall Senate members a few years ago and has become an annual tradition in Holcombe Hall. Each country represented volunteered to host a booth with educational offerings of presentations, pictures, books, food, dress, instruments, crafts, and other traditional items. Cultures represented included Cherokee Nation, Cameroon, Senegal, Mexico, Indonesia, Iran, South Korea, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Myanmar, Egypt, and China. Catering was provided by Qdoba, A Taste of Thai, and Pitas Mediterranean Grill. Holcombe welcomed over 150 people to the event from all different backgrounds and new connections were made in the UA community. Special thanks to the volunteers, RIC and the Hall Senates of Maple Hill, Pomfret, Northwest Quad, and Holcombe, as well as ISS for financial support and hard work to make this event a continued success! You can look forward to Dance Around the World, another Holcombe Hall Senate tradition, happening this spring.
On Thursday, December 6, 2012, Holcombe Hall hosted a farewell party for 9 departing international students and to usher out the Fall 2012 semester. The program included music, snacks, drinks, and vanilla and chocolate petit fours from Rick’s Bakery, which were decorated with snowmen, candles, holly leaves, “Farewell”, and “U of A”. Attendees included Holcombe residents, RAs from Holcombe and Futrall, Holcombe Hall Senate members, as well as staff members from ISS. It was a bittersweet moment for the residents and staff saying “goodbye” to their departing friends.

Kudos to presenters!!
Working on the new Yocum trash room drain!

Putting the boss to work!
Jeff operating the jack hammer.

Temp helpers Caleb and Dustin

Bryan Finney

Robert wishing Aaron would stop taking his picture!

Sustainability in Action!
This is the bottle filler water fountain we installed in Pomfret B wing last Christmas break. Its showing 31,033 bottles have been saved. If my research is correct it takes 27 empty bottles to make a pound. That one bottle filler has eliminated approximately 1,149 pounds. of plastic from the landfill in one year.

Aaron

Photos and Articles Contributed by Aaron England
During the Winter Break Housing maintenance staff* remodeled sections of the Enhanced Learning Center in Gregson Hall. We improved foot traffic routes; redid the reception area; renovated office space and a TV room; added seating for computer access and study; improved the aesthetic impact of the space for students and staff members. I’ll include images of the finished product in the January newsletter.

* David Pitner, Eddie Flores, John Sugg, Steve Smith, Bobby Anderson, John Cornelius, Mike Rouse, Nick Clark, Curtis Cody, Dustin Willis, Caleb McFeeters, Chris Cook
HOTZ OPEN HOUSE

Adding open spaces to the lobby

Jeff getting ready to escort Housing staff on their tour

Flo describing the new look and sustainability improvements in the student rooms to Honors College Staff

RAs and Residents’ Interhall Congress members were able to tour the new Honors Quarters

Looking forward to energy efficient windows and hvac units
CONSTRUCTION UPDATE: FOUNDERS

Getting closer to the Beam Signing Ceremony (see last page of newsletter)
WINTER LUNCHEON

Flo presented the updated Housing Master Plan

Housing Extended Family Tree:
We had 17 staff members volunteer to purchase gifts and 31 names submitted. Thanks to all who participated!

Emcee Alisha Gilbride

Ned’s cap was very compelling!

Thanks to Alisha Gilbride for the Extended Family Tree information

Elvis hopes that everyone, including the ladies in the Finance Office - and Bill, had a wonderful holiday and a restful break!
University Housing, Campus Dining and the Division of Student Affairs invites you to the Founders Hall Beam Signing Ceremony.

Friday, January 25, 2013, at 2 p.m.
Kimpel Hall Patio (Overlooking McIlroy Street)

There will be a short program followed by refreshments.