

# Peabody Post

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Supportive Services  
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**Consuela Combs,  
Family Advocate**

**Newsletter  
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## Monthly Money Tips—*Alfreda Drake*

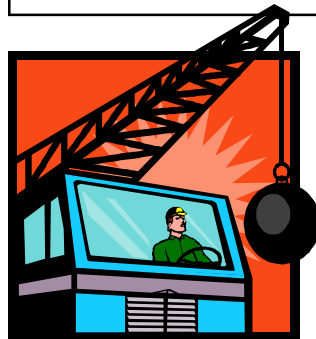
Tired of living paycheck to paycheck? Wish you had a money nest egg? Want to buy a house? Take a real vacation? Money woes got you stressed out? Well, you can change your current financial position with a plan and some discipline.

Tips to getting your financial house in order:

1. Join Columbus/Georgia Saves Program—It's free and you will have your own wealth coach to help you reach your financial goals
2. Budget your money monthly
3. Be aware of the Budget Busters
  - ◆ Debt
  - ◆ Emotion Spending
  - ◆ Emergencies and unexpected losses
  - ◆ Wasteful Spending



Want help? See Alfreda Drake at the Pastoral Institute through the HOPE VI Program, 649-6500!



## DEMOLITION CONTRACT AWARDED!!

A demolition contract has been awarded for Peabody Apartments. The developer, Integral Properties LLC, awarded the contract to Bianchi Industrial Services in July, 2004. The demolition is scheduled to be complete by September, 2005.

Bianchi Industrial will begin the perimeter fencing of Phase I and II the week of July 26, 2004 along with asbestos abatement. Building demolition is expected to begin in mid-August, 2004.

Special precautions will be taken to reduce dust and rodent infestation. There should be no disruption in utility service.

Special caution should be taken around the construction site and children should be asked to stay away.

We will continue to inform you of the status as the revitalization of Peabody Apartments progresses.

# Community News and Information

## North Columbus



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

The Club will re-open for the 2004-2005 school year on Monday, August 9th. Please be advised that the hours for the Club will be 2:30pm—7pm daily, except for holidays. Don't forget, you can still use your membership to the Club that you received over the summer, through the end of November. You will need to renew your membership by December 1, 2004 if you want to take advantage of all the programs available. your

The Club is open on days when schools are closed for In-Service and Teacher Work Days. It is an excellent remedy for your daycare dilemma if you are working. The Club is open to all children age 6—17. Your child can have fun, learn, and play, while you have peace of mind.

If you are interested in having your child attend the Club, please contact Mr. Owens at 323-1743!

Hey Sheila, did you know that there are only *14 families* left in Peabody?

Yeah, I know! And some families moved to North Carolina and even Texas!



## Remember These Past Newsletter Articles?

**Do You Know Need To Clear a Background Check?** Before you can move into an apartment, house, public housing, or get a job, you can expect a background check to be done. If there is negative information on your report such as an arrest record, you may face a roadblock. What if the information is wrong? What if the charges were dismissed or you were found to be innocent? *(from April 2004)*

**Pre-employment Screenings: Drug and Credit** The employer's drug test usually requires a check of all the National Institute of Drug Abuse approved testing profiles. Those include but are not limited to: PCP, marijuana, cocaine, opiate, and speed. Drug testing can determine if you have used these drugs in the last day or up to 77 days ago! Employers may choose a blood or urine drug test—its totally their choice not yours! A credit check may be used as a basis to see if you are a reliable person. If you always pay your bills on time, you are thought to be a reliable and responsible person! *(from November 2003)*

These articles have appeared in your newsletters over the past months. If you would like to have the full articles, please give us a call. We want you to get and keep the job you deserve!

# Neighborhood Network News

## Community Update

The Neighborhood Network Center (NNC), in partnership with the Literacy Alliance, held story time and reading. Twice weekly throughout the summer, the children enjoyed stories from visitors and special guests from the Chattahoochee Valley Regional Library System, Barnes and Noble Booksellers and the Columbus Wardogs.

To celebrate their accomplishments, the children were rewarded with a party, games and t-shirts. More special guests were invited to share their stories of being raised in public housing. Among those in attendance were the Honorable Judge John Allen, Gloria Weston-Smart and newly elected school board member Pat Hugely-Green. All of the guests grew up in public housing and shared stories of inspiration with the children. Judge Allen invited the children to visit his courtroom.

The children of the Neighborhood Network Center have also been participating in a Summer Book Club and will celebrate with a pizza party!

For more information on activities for children and adults please call 571-2918.



**Judge Allen shares words of encouragement**



**Darin Damron of the Columbus Wardogs shares a story**



**Patty Chamberlin prepares for story time**



**Gloria Weston-Smart shares stories of her days in public housing**

### Neighborhood Network Center

Monday 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

Tuesday 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

Wednesday 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

Thursday 9:30 am - 2:00 pm

## Reminder

Starting Monday, August 9th the Neighborhood Network Center will return to its regular schedule. You can develop marketable computer skills and begin your job search in just 5 short weeks.

- Week 1 - Introduction to Computers
- Week 2 - Accessing the Internet
- Week 3 - Microsoft Office
- Week 4 - Resume Writing Workshop
- Week 5 - Job Readiness Workshop



Reserve your seat today!  
Call 571-2918

## Resident Spotlight—*Ms. Valerie Willis*



**Ms. Willis' bright smile can light up a room!**

We are very pleased to introduce to you, Ms. Valerie Willis. She is an encouragement to others because of her determination to succeed. Simply put, she is remarkable!

Ms. Willis had been a resident in Peabody Apartments for 32 years. She said she didn't realize it had been so long until her relocation specialist, Mr. Ronnie Jones, told her. "It was just always a home. It was better than where we had come from and I was very proud of it. It was my "house".", says Ms. Willis with a smile.

Mrs. Alicia Richardson, Program Coordinator for the Neighborhood Network Center (NNC), was very happy to hear that Ms. Willis was being interviewed. "She is wonderful and inspiring! She doesn't let minor things stop her from doing the things she wants to do. She

didn't let her age keep her from getting her GED or learning about the computer. She is the best student in the class!" Ms. Willis has been taking classes at the NNC since June 28, 2004 and she loves it! "I'm just a beginner, so right now I am taking keyboarding classes". She attends the classes three nights a week without fail. Ms. Willis catches the bus from her home in Warren Williams to Wilson Apartments, where the NNC is located. Since her classes are from 5pm - 7pm, she must then get a ride home, because Metra Public Transportation doesn't run at that time. Ms. Willis says her daughters are proud of her and get a kick out of all that she is doing!

Aside from learning about computers, she has been a volunteer with *CONTACT* for the past 16 months. She really enjoys her job there as a Reassurance Caller. Ms. Willis telephones clients that are generally between the ages of 50—94 and see how they are doing, remind them to take their medications and to lock their doors. She says that those clients receiving the calls really look forward to them. She invites anyone to sign up to and volunteer because they could always use more help.

Several years ago, Ms. Willis attended a class at the Pastoral Institute called G.L.O.W. (Growing to Love our Womanhood). She had a wonderful time in the classes. One of the assignments involved taking pictures of family or friends. The pictures were then developed and presented to the participants in a photo album as a gift. In sharing her pictures, one learns that Ms. Willis is a proud grandmother of six and will share these pictures at the drop of a hat! She says that she already let her friend, "Condoleezza" Combs, look at them. Ms. Willis likes to call her Family Advocate, Mrs. Consuela Combs, this name as a way of showing her fondness for her. It is a sweet exchange between the two and a play on Consuela's name, which she thinks is very pretty.

A good number of her pictures lets you know how thrilled her family is for her. They include pictures of her graduation when Ms. Willis was awarded her GED in 1995. Ms. Willis recalls that day with a smile saying, "I got the royal treatment that day! My family, friends, and church members came out and it was really nice. They gave me a lot of cards and gifts." She thought it was too late to get her GED but at the age of 54, found out that it wasn't.

When asked about her Family Advocate, it's obvious that she is happy with Mrs. Combs. "I love talking to my Family Advocate, because she just lets me bend her ear for a while". Mrs. Combs

doesn't mind a bit and draws inspiration from Mrs. Willis, as well. "She has such a great enthusiasm for everything she does and she doesn't allow anything to keep her from doing her best. Even when we found out that the buses don't run after 6:30pm, she said that it was okay, because she can get a ride when her computer class ends. She is just a great person and I enjoy talking to her. She motivates me!"

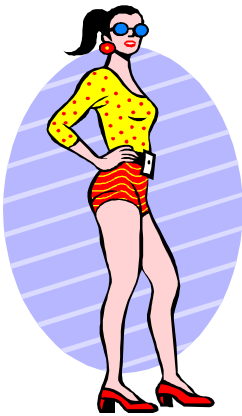
In the middle of all that keeps Ms. Willis busy, she still makes time to vote in every election. She feels it is a privilege to exercise your right to vote. "I would encourage everyone to get off the porch and go vote. They [politicians] may do what they want to, but that one vote could make a difference."

Ms. Willis says that she will consider moving back to the renovated Peabody area, "if it's the Lord's will, because it doesn't matter where you are, as long as you make that house a home." When you meet Ms. Willis, or get to visit her home, her personality lets you know that she could be at home anywhere. Home is where the heart is, and Ms. Willis has plenty of rooms to spare!

## Dress for Success!!

Before you leave for work, do one very important thing; check your mirror! If you haven't worked in a while or if you are beginning a new career, you will probably need to update your wardrobe. Make sure the clothes that you are choosing to wear, are suitable for the job you will perform. If you are in a job that requires you to wear a uniform, such as one in a restaurant, make sure your uniform is always neat and clean.

### Inappropriate Attire



If you are working in an office setting, the clothes you wear will need to be professional in appearance, ironed and clean. It's a good idea to stay away from faddish styles when in this type of environment. More companies today are allowing Casual Fridays. This means that you can wear nice jeans or slacks and possibly tennis shoes. You should avoid wearing T-shirts with logos, cut-offs, and tight fitting clothing in general. You want to be comfortable, not distracting.

Hair styles should be neat and your hair should be clean. Men should be well groomed and have a haircut when necessary. In today's society, dreadlocks can be worn while working, but the hair should be clean and kept moisturized.

When choosing to have nail extensions, opt for a length that will not keep you from doing tasks such as opening a file cabinet, or typing on a keyboard. If you decide to have them longer than average length, it's fine, just make sure you can do your work.

Your appearance is very important and can play a key role an employer's decision to select you for the job. Keep this in mind when you go on your next job interview. It can make all the difference. When you are not at work, feel free to express your individuality and be yourself. That is your personal time, but while at work, conservative is best. Good Luck!

### Appropriate Attire

