



Home Matters

A Message from the Executive Director

Winter, 2026

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As winter begins, we want to ensure all residents remain safe, warm, and informed. Please review the winter safety and maintenance information in this newsletter and report any issues-especially heating or water concerns - as soon as possible.

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Thank you for being part of our community. Our staff is committed to providing quality housing and support services throughout the winter season.

Wishing you a safe and healthy winter,
Alissa Collington, Executive Director

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Winter Safety & Maintenance

Cold weather can cause problems if issues are not reported early. Please help us keep your home safe, warm, and in good condition by following these tips:

HEATING SAFETY

- Report no heat or low heat immediately.
- Space heaters are not allowed.
- Do not use ovens or stoves to heat your home.
- Do not block vents or heaters.

PREVENT FROZEN PIPES

- Leave cabinet doors open under sinks during cold weather.
- Allow faucets to drip when temperatures are below freezing.
- Keep your thermostat set at a consistent temperature.
- Report leaks or water problems right away.

ELECTRICAL & FIRE SAFETY

- Do not overload outlets.
- Use extension cords only when necessary.
- Never remove or disable smoke detectors.
- Report electrical issues immediately.

WHEN TO CALL MAINTENANCE - CALL IMMEDIATELY FOR:

- No heat or hot water.
- Flooding or major leaks.
- Electrical hazards.

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After-Hours Emergency Maintenance (843) 241-1677

Policy Reminders

To remain in compliance with HUD regulations:

- Maintain your unit in decent, safe, and sanitary condition.
- Do not tamper with smoke detectors.
- Follow guest and parking policies.
- Report changes in household income or composition within 10 days of the change.



Happy New Year!

GHA
GEORGETOWN HOUSING AUTHORITY

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

CELEBRATING THE LEGACY, LEADERSHIP, AND CULTURE OF GEORGETOWN

This February, we honor the past, celebrate the present, and look forward to the future of Black history in Georgetown. Black history is local history — and Georgetown's story is rich, resilient, and inspiring.

Black History in Georgetown, SC

Georgetown's African American history is deeply rooted in resilience, leadership, and community strength. From Reconstruction to today, Black residents have shaped the cultural, political, and social foundation of our city.

One of Georgetown's most notable historical figures is Joseph H. Rainey, born into slavery in Georgetown and later becoming the first African American elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. His legacy represents progress, determination, and the power of civic engagement.

Gullah Geechee Heritage

Georgetown County is part of the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor, where African traditions, language, food, and customs have been preserved for generations. This heritage remains a living part of our community and Lowcountry culture.

These sites and institutions serve as a testament to the resilience and contributions of African Americans in Georgetown and the broader South Carolina landscape. Visitors can explore these sites to gain a deeper understanding of the African American history and culture that has shaped the region.

- Georgetown is home to a National Historic Landmark honoring Black political history.
- African American citizens played a major role in rebuilding Georgetown during Reconstruction.
- The Rice Museum: A National Historic Landmark that provides insight into the rice culture and the labor of enslaved West Africans in Georgetown County.
- Joseph H. Rainey House: The family home of the first African American elected to the US House of Representatives, highlighting the historical significance of Georgetown's African American heritage.
- Bethel AME Church: The oldest black church in Georgetown, a symbol of African American community and resilience.
- Historic Georgetown: The city's history is preserved in its streets, buildings, and cultural institutions, offering a glimpse into the past and the ongoing efforts to honor and preserve African American history.

Celebrate • Learn • Reflect



Winter Family Time

During the winter months, families can enjoy a variety of fun activities at home. Here are some ideas to keep everyone entertained and active:

- Indoor Winter Activities:** Engage in activities like crafting, baking, and building indoor forts to keep the kids busy and active.
- Family Games:** Play indoor games that require strategy and teamwork, such as card games, board games, or puzzles.
- Creative Crafts:** Get creative with arts and crafts, such as painting, drawing, or making holiday decorations.
- Family Movie Nights:** Enjoy a cozy movie night with popcorn, snacks, and a warm drink.

These activities can help families bond while enjoying the winter season. Remember to stay warm and enjoy the time together!



Easy Lasagna Soup

Servings: 4 - 6 | Prep Time: 5 Mins

Cook Time: 30 Mins | Total Time: 35 Mins

This shortcut lasagna soup makes attaining all the flavors of a good lasagna even easier. Thanks to its already-robust flavor, using Italian sausage instead of ground beef cuts down on the number of ingredients you'll need to buy and prep. Store-bought pasta sauce adds even more flavor. Make sure to use a pasta sauce that you like the taste of on its own, as it will provide the bulk of the soup's flavor.

Ingredients

- 1 pound ground hot or mild Italian sausage
- 1 (24-ounce) jar tomato-basil sauce
- 5 cups water, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 3/4 cup (3 oz) shredded Italian cheese blend



Directions

1. **Cook the sausage:** Heat a large Dutch oven over medium-high. Add the sausage and cook, stirring often and breaking into small pieces, until browned, crumbled, and cooked through, 6 to 9 minutes. Adjust the heat as needed to prevent overbrowning.
2. **Add the liquid ingredients:** Stir in the tomato sauce. Pour 1/2 cup of the water into the empty sauce jar, swirl to loosen any additional sauce, and add to the Dutch oven. Add the salt and remaining 4 1/2 cups water, scraping the bottom of the pot to dissolve any browned bits, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat.

- 3/4 cup whole milk ricotta cheese
- 6 uncooked lasagna noodles, broken into 2-inch pieces
- Chopped fresh basil, for garnish, optional

3. **Cook the noodles:** Add the lasagna noodles, reduce the heat to medium, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the noodles are cooked to al dente, 12 to 16 minutes.
4. **Make the ricotta mixture:** While the noodles cook, in a small bowl, stir together the Italian cheese blend and ricotta until combined. Set aside.
5. **Serve and garnish:** Remove the soup from the heat. Divide among 4 bowls and top evenly with dollops of the ricotta mixture. Garnish with fresh basil, if using.
6. **Refrigerate leftovers** in an airtight container for up to 3 days. Reheat on the stovetop over medium-low heat, adding a little water to help loosen it.

Courtesy of [SimplyRecipes.com/easy-lasagna-soup-recipe-11846934](https://www.simplyrecipes.com/easy-lasagna-soup-recipe-11846934)



Family Reads!

Best in Snow by April Pulley Sayre

Winter Story (Brambly Hedge) by Jill Barklem

Frederick by Leo Lionni

A Day on Skates by Hilda van Stockum

The Dark Is Rising by Susan Cooper

Swanfall by Sophie Kirtley

Fia and the Last Snow Deer by Eilish Fisher

The Snow Child by Eowyn Ivey

The Bear and the Nightingale by Katherine Arden

A Week in Winter by Maeve Binchy

Help Us Keep Pests Under Control

Pests like ants, cockroaches, mosquitoes, and rodents can become a problem if not reported early. Quick reporting helps prevent health risks and property damage.

What to Do

If you see bugs, rodents, or signs such as droppings or damage:

- Note the location.
- Take a photo, if possible.
- Report it immediately.

Early reporting keeps our community clean, safe, and pest-free.



How You Can Help

- Keep food sealed and areas clean.
- Dispose of trash properly.
- Report leaks or cracks promptly.

Just for Laughs

Which side of a polar bear has the most fur?

The outside.



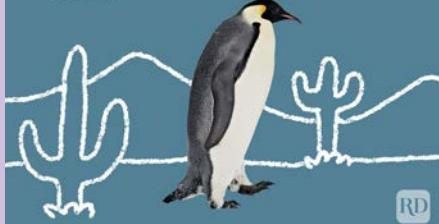
What is the best breakfast cereal to eat in the winter?

Frosted flakes.



What do you call a penguin in the Sahara Desert?

Lost.



Why did the snowman go to the doctor?

He was getting chills.



Home Matters is published quarterly by the Georgetown Housing Authority. Please send articles by 03/01/25 to: PO Box 209, Georgetown, SC 29442 or email / call: [\(843\) 546-9621 ext. 221](mailto:info@gtownhousing.org) Material is subject to approval.

UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY

- 1 – New Year, GHA Office closed
- 1 – RENT, RETRORENT & REPAYMENT AGREEMENTS DUE
- 6 – LATE CHARGES ADDED (morning)
- 13 – Board of Commissioners meeting 6:00 pm
- 15 – MAGISTRATE (for anyone who hasn't paid their bill)
- 15 – Resident Council Meeting 5:00 pm
- 19 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day, GHA Office closed
- 27 – GHA office closed to the public

FEBRUARY

- 1 – RENT, RETRORENT & REPAYMENT AGREEMENTS DUE
- 6 – LATE CHARGES ADDED (morning)
- 17 – Board of Commissioners meeting 6:00 pm
- 15 – MAGISTRATE (for anyone who hasn't paid their bill)
- 19 – Resident Council Meeting 5:00 pm
- 24 – GHA office closed to the public

MARCH

- 1 – RENT, RETRORENT & REPAYMENT AGREEMENTS DUE
- 6 – LATE CHARGES ADDED (morning)
- 10 – Board of Commissioners meeting 6:00 pm
- 15 – MAGISTRATE (for anyone who hasn't paid their bill)
- 19 – Resident Council Meeting 5:00 pm
- 23 – 26 – GHA office closed to the public

APRIL

- 1 – RENT, RETRORENT & REPAYMENT AGREEMENTS DUE
- 2 – Good Friday, GHA Office closed
- 6 – LATE CHARGES ADDED (morning)
- 14 – Board of Commissioners meeting 6:00 pm
- 15 – MAGISTRATE (for anyone who hasn't paid their bill)
- 16 – Resident Council Meeting 5:00 pm
- 28 – GHA office closed to the public

GHA Main Office Hours

Monday – Thursday: 8 am – 12 pm & 1 – 6 pm

Phone Directory: 843-546-9621

» To skip voice prompts, dial 2 then the extension. «

Alissa Collington	Executive Director	ext. 222
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Ashley Winns	Resident Services Coordinator	ext. 226
Jennifer Douglas	Admin. Assistant / Bookkeeper	ext. 224
	Front Desk / Work Orders	ext. 221
	After Hours Emergency Work Orders	(843) 241-1677
	TTY / TDD	(843) 461-3910

GHA Board of Commissioners

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Mr. Tomas Langley, Vice Chair
Ms. Alissa Collington, Secretary

Mr. J. Edwin Benton
Ms. Patrice Simmons