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## THE

## PRESTIGE PRESS

***The Lost Art of Working Hard***

Submitted By: Paul Spencer, President



Behind every fortune is someone who has labored long into the night to make it real. Behind every important discovery is a person who often grew weary searching for it.



Behind every magnificent work of art is an artist who spent hour after hour, month after month toiling at tasks that were tedious and seemingly endless. Behind the beautiful, soaring music is a composer who carefully arranged each note, each pause, each crescendo into place.



Effort cannot help but pay off. The fact is, your effort is the payoff. The fortune, the discovery, the work of art, and the music, as grand as they are, serve as mere tokens of the achievement.

The real achievement is in the achieving, and the real value is in the doing. Sincere, focused effort makes your life rich in every area, even as you do it.

Make the effort and the reward is guaranteed. The biggest reward is in the doing.



# New Online Claim Status Service

As a BCBS of Michigan member, with just a few clicks of the mouse you can now view your claim status online. Log on to [www.bcbsm.com](http://www.bcbsm.com) to register as a member.

The “Blues” recently launched an Online Claims Status Summary application that allows members to view the status of their claims online at any time.

Members will be able to view their claims and those of their dependents. Here is a sample of the information you will find:

- Claim Number
- Service Date
- Member Name and birth year
- Provider Name submitting claim
  - Claim Charge
  - Member Balance
  - Claim Status

Previously, members could get BCBSM claims information only through a paper Explanation of Benefits (EOB) or by calling Customer Service.

The online summary tool currently does not include dental or prescription claims, but these are planned in the future as additional Web improvements are put in to place.

Visit [www.bcbsm.com](http://www.bcbsm.com) for all of the latest that “Blues” has to offer.

Also note that BCBSM recently began issuing redesigned member ID cards. While the card will be different, the redesign will not impact your plan or your benefits. This redesign is a mandate from the BCBS Association, the national organization for all Blue plans.

Due to the process required for the BCBSM conversion, card issuance may appear random through January, 2009, after which all newly issued or re-issued cards will be in the new design. By January 1, 2011, redesigned cards will be issued for members who have yet to receive a new one.

Changes to the redesigned card will include:

- Magnetic Strip
- Useful Phone Numbers
- Enrollee’s first name is listed first
- A drug plan number and logo
- A dental plan logo if applicable

# Animal Cracker Petting Zoo

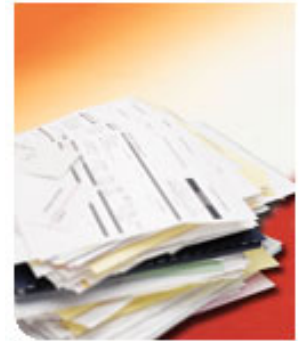
On Friday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, Century Place Apartments and its staff hosted an afternoon with Animal Cracker Petting Zoo, which was also open to the public. Thanks to Frank and Judy Depew, everyone who came enjoyed the variety of unique animals.



# The Accounting Arena

Submitted By:  
Shellie Haggart,  
Accounting Manager

**PICKS** - Regional picks are done the second and fourth weeks of the month - even if there are five weeks in the month. Picks are sent out on the second and fourth Wednesday. They are due back to Accounting by noon on Thursday (of that same week). When picks are returned there is a multi-step process which involves your Property Accountant and your Accounts Payable person. Checks have to be cut, remittance slips attached to the checks and mailed. All of this takes time, so it is imperative that picks are returned on time, so your Support Center staff has time to complete the process and send checks out in a timely manner.



From time to time we get picks returned with the Regional saying nothing can be paid because the Available Cash on the Cash Analysis is negative. Please take a look at the cash analysis below.

Cash Balance	\$7,211.00
NSF Cushion	<u>-500.00</u>
Ending Cash in Op Acct	6,711.00
Minus remaining payroll for month	<u>-2,621.00</u>
Cash available to pay invoices	4,090.00
Must Pays on AP list	<u>-5,500.00</u>
Available Cash	-1,410.00



At first glance it looks like there isn't any cash to pay bills. That is not the case. After the NSF cushion and remaining payrolls are deducted there is cash of \$4,090.00 to pay bills. There just isn't enough available cash to pay all of the Must Pays (or regular vendors). You will need to choose which must pays are going to be paid. Remember that we do have a payment priority order so we need to follow that order.

**INVOICE COPIES** - Please make sure that site managers make copies of invoices before they send them in to the Support Center. For M2 properties only, if you have invoices that are coded to 7000 accounts and are an RR draw eligible item, please keep those in a separate folder. Then when it's time to do an RR draw, those invoices are located in one place and you won't have to spend time trying to remember which vendors/invoices were coded to those accounts and searching for those invoice copies.

A final note: if you are unsure about any of the Accounting procedures, please contact your Property Accountant or Accounts Payable Associate for clarification. We are here to support you!

# Compliance Corner

Sometimes we are so caught up in just getting our re-certifications completed and they become so routine that we forget to look for the “little” things. We receive an on-line newsletter from Theo Pro (a compliance and consulting company) and on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July I read an article that is worth sharing.

## A Glimpse Into An Auditor’s Eye

*This week’s article will focus on two quick compliance tips that should give you a glimpse of compliance from the eye of an auditor. You may not be looking at a few of these items, but be sure that your auditor will!*

*Recertification time is a good time to conduct a “move-in memory” test. Memory is erratic at best. Fraudulent activities by the household can be uncovered at recertification because people may forget what they failed to disclose at the time of the move-in certification.*

*Be sure to look back at the types of income and assets that were disclosed at move-in. Watch the date of hire on the employment verification form at recertification. It may disclose that a household member was employed at the time of move-in even if the household member indicated that he or she was not. Compare the type and amount of assets that a household declares at recertification to the information provided at move-in. Sometimes residents purposely conceal assets on the original application but forget to conceal those assets later on. If the asset is discovered at recertification and can be proven to have been owned at the time of the original application, take appropriate action if the asset means that the household was over-income at move-in.*

*Speaking of assets, does your potential resident pay the security deposit with a personal check? Has a checking account been verified in the file? The same question could be asked of any type of account shown elsewhere in the file. For example, if employment pay stubs are used in the file and they indicate any type of retirement fund, 401K, stock fund, checking, or other asset – these accounts must be verified in the file.*

*Furthermore, if you have to verify those assets with bank statements, don’t forget to check the math! Do the average deposits made per a month coincide with the monthly income acknowledged on the application or verified in the file? If the bank statements show a larger amount deposited monthly or deposits from sources that were not verified, the applicant will need to be questioned more thoroughly in regards to income.*

So take a few minutes and pull the resident file and review last year’s move in or recertification. Is something on this checklist that wasn’t on last year? Better for us to catch discrepancies than the auditor!

Submitted By: Christy Frick, Subsidy Specialist  
Excerpts from THEO PRO

## The Big Six

- **Occupancy**
- **Collections**
- **Compliance**
- **Service Requests**
- **Unit Turns**
- **Curb Appeal**



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*Do the Right Thing!*



## From the Mindfield of Jeff Schaeffer...

### The Importance of “We”

Stephen Covey, an influential educator that I admire talks about the importance of “beginning with the end in mind.” As you all know, our Prestige “end in mind” is to become the best, most respected property management company in the industry. So how do we get there?

There are many variables to take into consideration, but to me, one of the most important is to create a culture that people want to be part of, a culture of “we” if you will. This means that employees feel that Prestige is their company too, and communicate, respond, and take responsibility to make it so. It requires good personal chemistry and trust among team members so that people enjoy the job, the residents, and each other. In a culture of “we” self-interest, team-interest, resident-interest, and company-interest are all aligned to create continuous improvement in competency and satisfaction.

In most companies there exists an “us vs. them” dynamic that typically pits front line staff against management. It creates a culture of resistance and self protection rather than a desire to work together to create something worthwhile. This way of doing business (paradigm) is counterproductive to our philosophy and goal. It generates hard feelings, unpleasant working conditions, poor energy generation, turnover, and limited focus on standards, proper execution, and results. An “us vs. them” paradigm does not allow for a culture of true teamwork where company and personal values are in alignment; a culture where free flowing communication happens in an atmosphere of shared cooperation and quality execution.



If we are truly to become the best then our key players must have both an understanding of what that requires as well as a willingness and openness to explore new possibilities of what we can become. By the way, anybody can become a key player. It just takes desire and commitment. The “We” paradigm requires confidence, not just in the company but also in ourselves. If you don’t agree with a decision, policy, or standard, by all means question it to someone who can do something about it. We may not change it, but we want you to participate fully in the dialogue and decision making process. Realize that you have access to be heard all the way up to the CEO of this company.

We need you to have enough information to make an informed choice to become a valuable and contributing member of Prestige, but I believe, it is also more complicated than just making a choice. It requires commitment and faith that your commitment to the Company will be both recognized and rewarded as career advancement opportunities present themselves.

Only mentally and emotionally strong people are capable of committing themselves whole-heartedly to some thing or someone. Do you control your emotions or do your emotions control you? Are you able to think about a situation objectively as an observer before you react emotionally or do you act first and think second? Are you satisfied with your life or are you perpetually angry? People who can't control their emotions live roller coaster existences.

True commitment to others requires first and foremost a commitment to ourselves. It can be scary when we decide we want to become the best person we can be. Actually by committing to others, we are saying that I am committing to myself to become the best person that I can be in order to honor my commitment to you. Whether it's committing to a relationship, an idea or ideal, your faith, or your company, committing is the difference between jumping into the pool rather than just sticking your toe into the water. Commitment is not gradual it's a leap. Just remember that becoming the best person you can become is a process that will take time. It is not a switch that will change your life instantly.



This shift requires openness, willingness, and tenacity to breaking out of old habits that hold us back from the kind of success possible when we choose to align ourselves with something that can have very positive personal outcomes. Success and happiness to me can be evaluated by how satisfied am I with the person I'm becoming. My satisfaction increases when I am engaged and committed to my life. Our lives are not a dress rehearsal. You might as well commit to something that will increase your personal satisfaction, your growth as a person, and your worth.

As an example, we recently conducted a communication exchange (aka a meeting) with 112 Maintenance personnel. Midway through the meeting a Maintenance Tech came up to me, introduced himself, and proceeded to share with me an important need that he identified. He also stated that he would like to address this need and that he wants to move up in the company. That is very gratifying for me. The ball is in his court to deliver on his commitment. First he made a commitment to himself, and now he is working on producing a needed process that will help us improve. This is someone who is taking ownership in his potential and the Company by identifying a need and seeking a win/win outcome. It also puts him on our radar screen. If he can produce a quality product that helps us execute better in this area, we will keep looking for opportunities for growth for him. That's how the culture of "we" works.



The more you commit to yourself, the more engaged you become in your own life. You start looking at your world in terms of what can be done as opposed to what can't be done. You focus on solutions instead of problems. You feel energized by your work instead of exhausted by it. You generate positive energy not negative energy. And most importantly, you feel good about yourself and your contribution. That's how we become the best, most respected property management company in the industry. It starts with making a personal commitment to ourselves. Think about it....



# The RPM Review...

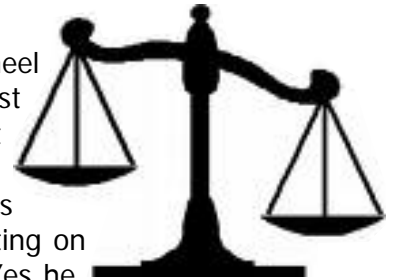


There are so many different topics that I could write an article about in relation to what is going on in my career right now, but probably the most important topic in my life today is Balance. Finding the right balance in life so that we can relax once in a while is something I believe to be imperative to our happiness. I sometimes wonder if perhaps this is the secret of life, creating that deep inner peace that I think we all search for within ourselves. Take a moment to write out the many different roles you play in life, or the "hats" you wear. I'm a Dad, Husband, Regional Property Manager, Coach, Friend, Caretaker, Athlete, Writer, Financial Planner, Son, shall I go on? I just rattled off

the first 10 that came to mind, but surely there are many other hats I wear if I take a deeper look. So how do I decide what's most important? What comes first, if anything?

Balance really pertains to a lot of things doesn't it? Let's think about this for a minute, there are millions of things that just wouldn't work right without it! Take a look at my golf swing for example, (or maybe look away whatever's more comfortable for you). When I am in good balance, and swinging within the means of what my body is capable of, I can hit that little white ball right where I want it to go. But if I am just the slightest little bit out of balance, even mentally, then there is no rhythm or harmony in my swing and trust me, no happiness.

I was outside the other day trying to teach my son how to ride a two-wheel bike. Now here is a great example of something we all take for granted. Most of us learned to ride a bike when we were young, and then forgot all about the struggle we had to overcome to get there. It was so hard for my little boy to trust his own balance, let alone the reassurance I was giving him as we worked on this new challenge for him. My point is that he was so fixating on the fear of falling and getting hurt, that he was not successful this time. Yes he will try and try again, and eventually I know that he can learn to ride a bike, but the first thing he has to conquer is that fear! What did it take for all of us to learn? Let Go!!! Now when you're 6 years old, that fear can be one of the biggest obstacles standing in your way.



Balancing my life had to begin by first taking a great leap of faith. I don't claim perfection on this topic, but I have made enough progress to know that it makes a difference. Once I began to trust in myself, and trust in my team I found that I didn't have to stay so fixated on any particular area of my life. For a while this was really tipping the scale for me; I would become so focused on one issue, that I was forced to operate under a "squeaky wheel gets the grease" style of action, making me much less effective in my position.



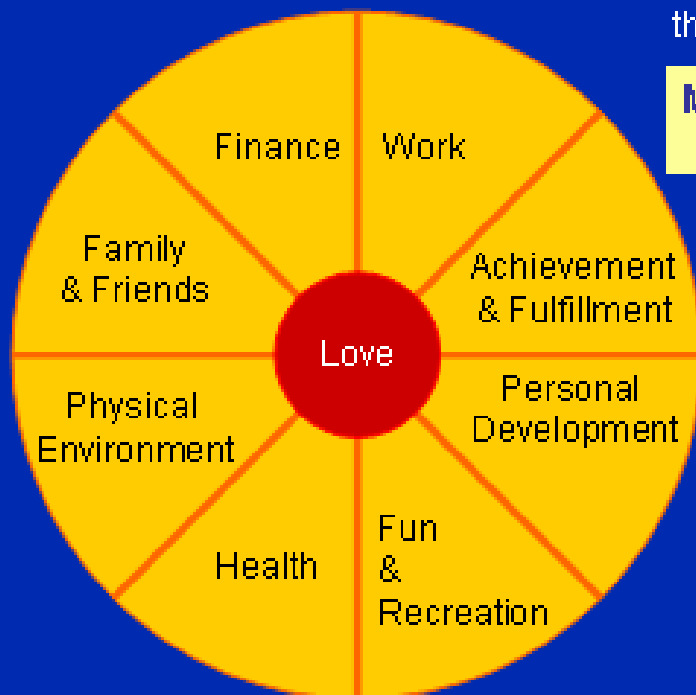
Once I was able to "Let Go" and take it one thing at a time things began to roll downhill. First, I had to really take a hard look at what is important to me. I had

to prioritize my numerous roles in life. This may sound simple, but really it's not. For example, my family and career have always been a top priority, but deep down I really love other things too, like competing in sports for example. Finding the time for both is not always possible. I also have long-term goals of saving money for retirement, but I also love to spend it! So you see, there can be an inner turmoil between my long-term goals/values and my selfish desires. Ahhhh, now we're getting somewhere...



While I could probably write a novel on how Balance applies to my life, I will spare all of you and cut to the chase. I would like to share with you this simple exercise that I found online. You can use it to help balance your life! It is important to do this exercise on a regular basis, because as human beings our priorities tend to change and evolve. Simply follow the instructions within the diagram; first draw a line across each category that reflects your satisfaction with this area of your life right now, (loosely translated: the longer the line, the more satisfied you are with the area). The areas that have short lines or no line at all are where it's time to put some focus. For myself, I will admit that health is a pretty short line. My goals are to exercise more regularly and to eat foods that are good for my body more often! Good luck to all of you who are taking the time to do this exercise. I am always open to discussion on Balance, and if you would like to talk further about it, please feel free to email me at [sjones@kmgprestige.com](mailto:sjones@kmgprestige.com).

Draw a line across each category area that reflects your satisfaction with this area of your life right now.



### Making Changes in Your Life Balance: **Ask yourself**

1. "What do I want?"
2. Doublecheck: "Is that what I really want?"
3. "What am I not paying enough attention to in my life right now?"
4. "What is the easiest first step I can take now in the direction of what I want?"
5. Review your personal balance regularly

Adapted from: "NLP Coaching", Ian McDermott and Wendy Jago

[1000ventures.com](http://1000ventures.com)

Submitted By: Scott Jones, Regional Property Manager



# MAINTENANCE TIPS

**Doug Alexander, Maintenance Director—Avery Square Apartments**

1. The first maintenance tip is a quick and easy way to repair a leak or add new plumbing to your building, its called a SharkBite fast push-fit connection. You put it on the ends of the pipe and you're done, no soldering and if you make a mistake there is a tool that removes the fitting so you can reuse it again. The SharkBites run between \$8.00 and \$12.00 each
2. The other maintenance tip is found on the web site for Prest-on. This is a drywall clip that allows you to patch larger holes, it's called a frogger clip. It holds the drywall in place so it is easier to mud the surface. The clips usually run about \$16.00 for 50 clips.

**Morris Boyd & Layla Nelson-Dumas, Maintenance Technician and Manager—Duvernay Park**

Here are a few maintenance tips geared towards Preventative Maintenance:

1. Every three months when we replace furnace filters, we always check the setting on the hot water tank, not only does this keep residents safe from burns, it keeps the utilities down. If you don't have to replace furnace filters, have your Maintenance Technician check as a standard when going into a unit for work orders.
2. As a courtesy we always ask residents when we do work orders, if any of their light bulbs need replacing. Most of my residents keep regular bulbs in their homes for us to change so the Site doesn't incur the cost. This keeps slips and falls down to a minimum and for those who have housekeeping issues.....keeping rooms well lit remind them to keep things tidy.



**Bob Bowling, Maintenance Technician—Cherry Hill**

Bob has found that if you organize your tool rooms that you get the jobs done faster and with less stress. It is always easier to find something when it has a specific place to be.

**Deb Jeffery, Leasing Consultant—Sawmill Estates**



1. Baking Soda: Removes stains from pots and pans.
2. Lemon: Cut one in half and use it as a scrub brush. It's also a great way to clean a microwave. Put it in the microwave for about 1-1/2 minutes. The juice then softens the baked-on goo. The acid coats the inside of the microwave and you can just wipe it off.
3. Salt: Cleans and removes smells from your cutting boards. Also, cleans liquid carpet stains. Pour it on top of stain, wait about 15 minutes. When it is dry, vacuum. Great for the red wine stains.
4. White Vinegar: A must for cutting through grease.

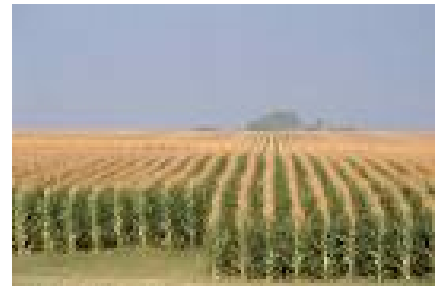


## Ramblings from Your RVP... Joanne Golden

### Thirty Rows of Corn

It's amazing to me how increasingly fast and complicated the world can be. We all own more gadgets, tend to our never-ending bills, are in touch with more people and have more places to go. I feel like I am in the middle of 80 different incomplete projects and can't quite catch a breath to finish any one of them. It can be overwhelming and discouraging at times. How do you keep going, stay focused and accomplish what needs to get done? It's been on my mind lately and I don't have the answer, but as I reflect there are a couple things that I have come to realize.

When I was young my father expected his children to never be idle. Idle means were the devils workshop. We always had things to do after school, and in the summer if we didn't have a job, he gave us one. One summer my younger brother and I were told to hoe the cornfield; it was 30 acres of corn! The task seemed insurmountable but we did it. I still look at that field behind the house and feel proud to have accomplished the task. I know he was trying to teach me hard work, but looking back, I think the real lesson was having the right attitude about the task at hand. It's how you choose to look at the work. Will you think it impossible to accomplish or become overwhelmed and get a bad attitude? Attitude to me is more important than the facts. We have a choice everyday regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. Some days it is more difficult, but I find those are the important days to have the right attitude, because it sets the right atmosphere for the day, not just for me, but also for those around me.



I also find there is significant strength in trust. I have been in business for a while and I find nothing moves as fast as trust. I think about the things I have accomplished with someone I trust and we move forward like the speed of light. We both know we can trust one another and the task at hand will be accomplished. Even if we miss communicate along the way, we can work through it quickly because we trust one another. Then I think about how slowly things get accomplished with those I have not yet built enough trust with and things move at glacier speed. It takes more phone calls, more e-mails, more explaining, more, more, more. Why? Because the trust has not yet developed to a level that we can move forward quickly and smoothly. So, building that trust is very important and something you can do something about. People want to be trusted. Who do you trust, but more importantly, who trusts you? Trust is established through actions; even the smallest of actions establish trust. No one enjoys working in a non-trusting relationship and if you are experiencing this at work, at home, or with friends and family, change it. Restore the trust and it will have a significant impact in all facets of your life.

# Happy Anniversary!



We appreciate your contribution toward helping us become the best, most respected property management company in the industry. Thank you for all of the hard work you do!

Congratulations to the following individuals on their Anniversary !

<b>NAME</b>	<b># of Years</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b># of Years</b>
MICHELE CONTRERAS	8	KRISTINA WALKER	1
JILL MUNK	14	SHARON WERNER	1
KEITH HARTL	3	DICK BECKROW	1
MARY LOU HOWARD	6	HELEN BECKROW	1
MARILYN INGALLS	3	DEBORAH MILLER	2
WAYNE SAMPSON	3	BRENDAN KANE	2
HAROLD WHEAT	3	MICHAEL CARNESECCHI	1
RANDI ALLISON	5	FLOYD PEAKE	1
DAVID LAFOUNTAIN	5	ALEXIS HEARRON	7
MYSIA VAUGHN	1	RICKEY SCOTT	8
LAKECIA POWELL	1	KEITH SHELTON	3
JACK CLARK	2	CHERYL NYE	4
ANGELA TOBAR	2	ROBERT FLAGER	9
ROSE BOGGS	3	EVELYN AURIEMMO	9
GREGORY ANNALA	8	JERRY KAPNICK	9
MARILYN FRANTZ	3	JAMES HARTLEY	5
CAROL MYERS	3	AMANDA BALDRIDGE	5
LEONARD CURTISS	1	LEE ENBODY	4
SHANNON MILLER	1	TODD WEAVER	6
ANDRA ZIEMKE	4	JAMES BREIDENSTEIN	1
AMY BAKER	14	CLAUDIA ZEBELL	1
KATHY EMERICK	1	RANDALL ZEILINGER	1
MICHAEL STUHLER	4	DENNIS RIES	2
ROBERT JACKSON	3	JENNIFER PARSONS	3
AUDREY KEITH	11	VINCENT DAVIS	2
ANNETTE DEROSIA	24	JOSH FORNEY	1
BARBARA ARMSTRONG	11	LARRY CHILDERS	7
DIANNE JACKSON-PHILLIPSON	1	FERRINO PETTIGREW	10
CHRISTINE COLLET	1		



# Need Office Supplies?

With school starting and the sales beginning for school supplies make sure that you check the ads for supplies that you may be needing for your office, whether it's for your site office or home office.



This is a great time to buy supplies if your site has the money to spend. Even just \$5 - \$10 in Petty Cash could purchase a lot of supplies at the prices that have been advertised. Make sure to check not only Meijer and Wal-mart, but also Walgreen's, Staples and Office Depot. They also have some good in store deals as well!



As always stay within your budget but if you have the funds, it is something worth looking into.

Submitted By: Lynna Quinn, Property Manager



## What's Cookin'?

### Lemonade Pie

Here is a great, easy, dessert recipe that everyone loves ♥

- 14 oz Eagle Brand sweetened condensed milk
- 12 oz Cool Whip (remove from freezer an hour before)
- 6 oz frozen lemonade (thawed)
- 1 (prepared) graham cracker pie crust



Mix sweetened condensed milk, Cool Whip and lemonade together, then pour into pie crust. Freeze for at least 4 hours then enjoy ☺

Submitted By: Karen Kirsch, Tax Credit Specialist



# What's Cookin'?

Continued...

## Cool Whip "Something"

- 1 Tub of Cool Whip (cooled, not frozen)
- 1 Jar Crushed Pineapple
- 1 Jar Mandarin Oranges
- 1 Pkg. Slivered Coconut

Upgrade Options: A few bananas or blueberries or raspberries or sliced strawberries depending on what's available. This is clean out the fridge time or whatever is on sale.

Drain the liquid out of the jars of fruit. Take the cool whip (that is cooled, not frozen) and mix with the crushed pineapple and mandarin oranges. Cut up the banana or any other fruit your putting in. Add 1/3-1/2 of the coconut and mix up all ingredients.



I have on occasion also grated up a small chocolate bar and had this on top of the dessert for looks.

Submitted By: Samuel Brooks, MIS Director



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### We want to hear from you!

Do you have an article, tip, trick or story you would like to share? Please send your item of interest to:

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