



A community-based newspaper serving the Puget Sound area since 1981



The Voice

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2006
Articles translated
into six languages

The newspaper of Neighborhood House

President Bush's 2007 budget shorts public housing...again

By VOICE STAFF

When President Bush released his 2007 federal budget proposal last month, housing advocates and low-income housing providers across the country learned that, once again, subsidy for public housing programs could be on the decline.

The announcement came just weeks after the 2006 budget, with its own set of cuts to housing and other social service programs, was approved.

If the President's 2007 budget is adopted exactly as proposed, the capital fund would be cut by 12 percent, a \$1.4 million loss for the Seattle Housing Authority. The capital fund pays for the maintenance and renovations necessary to keep the public housing buildings running.

Although the proposed budget calls for a slight increase in Section 8 funding and steady funding for public housing, costs associated with inflation mean the funding levels essentially amount to cuts to those programs.

The President also proposes an almost 38 percent cut for the Community Development Block Grant program, funding that the City of Seattle uses for capital projects and services related to low-income people.

The cut in the block grant program poses a more complicated problem for housing advocates. Because the program remains a high priority for cities nationwide, they will lobby hard to keep its funding, making it that much more difficult to lobby for restoring funding to public housing.

Typically, the President's budget is only the starting point for discussions, but with this budget proposal, the current administration has made its priorities clear.

Housing for low-income residents of Seattle, or any other major U.S. city, is far down on the list.

Already, housing advocates across the country have raised objections. In a recent statement, Sunia Zaterman of the Council of Large Public Housing Authorities (of which SHA is a member) pointed out that the federal government is ignoring a study done by its own Department of Housing and Urban Development, which estimated the cost of existing public housing at \$4.3 billion per year.

"The administration wants to spend \$3.56 billion to operate public housing," she wrote. "According to HUD's own new operating fund formula, that is only 81 percent of what is actually needed."

Resident finds voice and path to activism

By GINA OWENS
Special to the Voice

As a woman who has invested 30 or more years into the working world, it was easy for me to succumb to the mind set that says, "Politicians are all the same," and the ever-so-familiar, "Why bother when my vote isn't even recognized?"

Politics just wasn't important enough for me to spend time and energy on.

I had too many other important things to think about. For instance, "How do I pay all my bills when I only bring home \$1,400 a month?" or "Where do I get help paying for my electric bill when all the programs have exhausted all their available funds?"

Sound familiar to any of you?

But that was before two car accidents disabled me to the point of not being able to work. The second car accident alone was enough to damage my spine and prevent me from returning to my job as a medical assistant, which I had held for many years.

It also put me in the circle of people who have struggled for endless time periods with real disabilities.

After five years of dealing with our bureaucratic system, I have a new respect for people who have been fighting to survive within it.

This is the reason why I now fight so hard in the political arena. I speak out whenever possible to change the laws which I feel have been written by people

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Festival celebrates African-American culture, history

Festival director's story demonstrates the central importance of the black family

By ALYSSA MARTIN
Voice reporter

Festival Sundiata, which occurs every President's Day weekend, offers Seattle a unique opportunity to reflect on the sacrifices and achievements of its African-American citizens.

This year's theme "A Family Reunion," had special resonance for festival Executive Director Twanda Hill, who drew from the strength of many family members as she built a successful life and career in the city.

This year, Hill worked with volunteers to create a space for families to reconnect and unite in celebration of black culture. In addition to booking top-tier performers to showcase the diversity of talent in the black community, she created an inviting space for the many people who make up the traditional black family.

"Sundiata's a place for our community to celebrate and give thanks to our ancestors," she said.

The many-layered black family played a big role in Hill's life, and her passion for these connections resonated throughout the festival.

Hill was born in New York to parents who struggled with alcoholism and poverty. A caring aunt made all the difference. Even with a 5-year-old son, no place to live, no husband and very little money, she took Hill in and made things work.

"We always had lights and I was never hungry or dirty," Hill said.

Every day after junior high, Hill picked up her younger cousin so the family wouldn't have to pay for additional child care costs. Because her aunt wasn't her official legal guardian, Hill grew up without health insurance.

"I didn't do gymnastics and I didn't go on ski trips," she remembers with a chuckle. "Instead I played ping pong."

One day, Hill's aunt moved the family to Seattle to live with a boyfriend, but after a few months she found herself

brokenhearted and without a place to live. Her aunt asked Ben and Dorothy Woods, friends they barely knew, for help.

"The adults that step in to help are not always family," says Hill. "The Woods were like the Cosby family to me. People say stable, successful black families don't exist, but they do."

Within a few months, Hill's aunt had found a new job and a place to live in the Ravenna neighborhood.

"It seemed like we were the only black people there. It was total culture shock for me," she said. Mandatory busing in the 1970s brought Hill relief. "Even if I was the only black girl in Calculus, at least there were other black students at my school."

After graduating from Washington State University, Hill landed a job as the social director at the Seattle Tennis Club, as one of its first black managers. For ten years Hill planned black-tie parties, weddings and other high-end celebrations for a very wealthy (and mostly white) clientele.

In a very Sundiata-way, Hill credits her **Please see "Sundiata" on page 2**



PHOTO BY ALYSSA MARTIN

Festival Director Twanda Hill's extended family made her success possible.

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Human trafficking: the hidden horror around us

By JESSICA BANKES BEATTIE
Special to the Voice

When Rani was seven years old, her life in southern India changed forever. Her father was sick and the family was financially strained. Hearing about their situation, an acquaintance approached her family, offering to temporarily care for Rani.

Her offer, she said, would provide them some financial relief. She told them that their daughter would be nearby and promised they could visit her regularly. Rani's parents had no way of knowing that the woman was actually a child trafficker.

Rani's mother visited her for several months, but arrived one day to find that her daughter had "disappeared." Rani's traffickers had taken her across a border in India where she remained for the next few months. Traumatized and unable to speak the region's language, her physical and psychological health declined quickly. After some time, she was deemed "useless" by her traffickers and she was moved again. Eventually, Rani was internationally adopted, and she now lives near Seattle.

Rani's story is not uncommon. She and her family were the victims of human trafficking, a modern-day form of slavery. According to the U.S. Department of State, between 14,500 and 17,500 people—mostly women and children—are trafficked across international borders and into the United States every year.

Trafficking can happen anywhere. Some of us may live in the presence of trafficked individuals without realizing it.

Victims in the U.S. are typically from Asia, Central and South America and Eastern Europe. They may be forced to work in the sex trade, in domestic labor, in factories, hotels or restaurants or may also be exploited in mail order bride or child adoption schemes.

Trafficking victims may show signs of depression or physical abuse and they may have little-to-no English skills, a "companion" who does all the talking for them and an air of being controlled by another.

Carrie Schonwald, Human Trafficking Outreach Coordinator for Refugee Women's Alliance, part of the Trafficking Response Team (TRT), says that if an individual is suspicious that they are in the presence of a victim and can safely ask questions, the most important question to ask is, "Can you leave?"

Washington state's geography makes it an ideal locale for traffickers. According to a report by the Washington State Task Force Against Trafficking of Persons, our

proximity to Mexico, our international border with Canada, our many ports and large agricultural business help make Washington a place where "the trafficking industry cannot only exist but prosper."

But Washington is also one of the leaders in taking collaborative action against human trafficking. In 2002, Washington established the first Anti-Trafficking Task Force in the nation and, in 2003, it was the first state to create a state law making trafficking a crime.

While new laws have been passed and trafficking programs exist, service providers working to help trafficked people have difficulty finding victims. In the last four years, only a total of 611 victims were found.

"Victims are paralyzed by fear," Schonwald said. "Not only do they fear for their own well-being, but they fear for other family members' safety as well. International victims often don't know where they are and don't speak the language. Traffickers lead them to believe that no one here will believe their story and that they have no rights. They are told they will be arrested and deported if they go to law officials. They remain isolated and controlled."

Even though it's hard to find trafficking victims, services are available to help them. Both the TRT and the Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network provide intensive case management and coordination of services for victims.

Gillian Apfel, program coordinator of WARN stressed the importance of raising awareness about human trafficking. "Trafficking is an underground crime," she stated. Victims need to know that they have rights that are protected under federal law. The bottom line, people trafficked are victims, not criminals.

While some victims of human trafficking never escape (women have died in the brothels into which they were trafficked), some do. Rani was reunited with her biological mother in 1999. She said the experience inspired her to become an advocate for trafficking victims. She currently dedicates a lot of her time to public speaking and works with service providers who help victims. "It's so important that people understand that they are not alone," she shared. "I want to be a voice for all the children and victims who are out there."

If you are, or you suspect someone you know may be, a victim of human trafficking, please call the Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Team at (206) 245-0782 or the Trafficking Response Team at (206) 898-4741.

months of exhaustive planning, Hill still talks on her cell phone with the energy of a 16-year-old.

"I've got on flats, I'm ready to party now!" she says over the line.

Clearly, when it comes to family and community, this successful woman has a lot to celebrate.

Sundiata

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ancestors and family for giving her the confidence to leave her old job and start her own event-planning and graphic design business.

Two days into the festival and after

The Voice

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The Voice, the newspaper of Neighborhood House, is published monthly with the support of the Seattle and King County Housing Authorities. Neighborhood House helps diverse communities of people with limited resources attain their goals for self-sufficiency, financial independence and community building. The Voice contributes to that mission by providing low-income people, immigrants, refugees and other concerned parties with timely, relevant news. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the staff, Neighborhood House, SHA or KCHA. We welcome articles and tips from the community and reserve the right to edit all submissions.

New Medicare drug plan proves confusing to many

State will pick up co-pays for low-income people

By VOICE STAFF

Last summer, Sandy Rose was in a horrible accident, where a truck driver slammed into her car and pushed it into the vehicle in front of her.

Her seat was broken, her body was tossed and she suffered a head injury and broken bones along with nerve and muscle damage.

Now, she's among the millions of seniors and disabled people trying to figure out the new Medicare Part D prescription drug program.

Rose was one of the over 24 million nationwide who, at the urging of the federal government, signed up for a drug plan at the end of last year. So far, she said, it has created nothing but headaches.

"It screwed up everything," she said in an interview last month. "My January money was gone because I was hit with so many payments. Now I'm waiting to find out what will happen in February."

Rose joined about a dozen other Island View residents trying to get a better understanding of the new program at an informational meeting organized by Senior Rights Assistance at their Seattle Senior Housing Program building.

There was some good news to be shared. Last month, Gov. Christine Gregoire announced that the state will allocate \$14 million to cover drug co-pays for the state's poorest residents—those who previously had their prescription drug costs covered by Medicaid.

About 96,000 people fit into this category, and many take between seven and 15 prescription drugs per month, Gregoire said. To expect them to pay the co-pays on a \$570 monthly Social Security check is not possible, she added.

The state will be using a one-time reimbursement from the federal government to cover the co-pays. Declining prescription drug costs meant that the state overpaid its federal Medicare bill last year, and the federal government has given Washington



PHOTO BY STACY SCHWANDT

Sandy Rose is one of many seniors who have had trouble figuring out the new Medicare Part D benefit.

a \$14 million refund.

The governor acknowledged that other funding sources will have to be identified if the co-pay coverage is to continue. The state started picking up the co-pays in February, however people who had already paid the fees out of pocket will not be reimbursed.

The new Medicare Part D program has helped some people who don't qualify for Medicare save money on prescription drugs. Usually, those enrolled in a plan play a premium, a deductible and a certain percentage of their drug costs.

The plans are administered by private companies under contract with Medicare. Not all plans cover the same drugs, so Senior Services has put together a questionnaire to help interested seniors pick a plan that works for them.

Rose said those who decide to enroll should be warned that they will receive a barrage of paperwork from other insurance companies. Know the name of the company you are enrolled with, and don't fill out paperwork you don't understand, she said.

"It's just been such a confusing experience," she said. "It's just taken its toll."

You can get more information about this questionnaire and other information on the prescription drug coverage by calling 1-888-435-3377.

Leadership

Continued from front page

without any real experience to tell them how the laws will affect people.

I didn't start this speaking out with great confidence, however. In the beginning, I was a rookie—a scared and timid rookie.

I was afraid that people wouldn't take me seriously, that my words would get tossed into the "unimportant-opinions" column, or worse, that they would get shot down by some bureaucratic person before I was even heard.

With help from Washington Citizen Action, the grassroots organization that sent me to trainings and workshops, my voice became strong and willfully powerful.

I told personal stories of how each issue affected my own life. I wrote letters to my legislators and attended more trainings and workshops.

Before I knew it, just one year after I began volunteering with this organization, I was one of five founders to start a local chapter. In my second year, I was elected as a member of the state board of directors.

Now, I use my voice at all of our trainings and events—with a stronger, more assertive purpose.

I have learned by trial and error that what

I say and how I say it can indeed make all the difference, especially when it's backed by more voices from others who feel as strongly as I do.

Being part an organization where I am amongst others who care about the same issues with the same passion as me is a blessing that I now know I can't do without.

I can no longer sit by and listen to laws being passed without my input.

I will continue to contact my legislators with my opinions and expect them to take it to heart, because I am a person with an experienced voice.

And who better to tell them the real deal than those of us who have actually been affected by the laws?

This opportunity is available for any person who is interested. Consider contacting a grassroots organization that works on issues you care about. Chances are there will be someone there to help you get involved. You can search for organizations on the Internet or in the library.

My next step up the ladder? I have just been asked to sit on Washington Citizen Action's regional board.

Now that is what I call a real accomplishment. And to think that one day just a few years ago...nobody even knew my name.



Health Notes

A column devoted to your well-being

By GAEA HAYMAKER

High Point Medical and Dental Clinic

You wouldn't hand a cigarette to a toddler or blow smoke rings in a baby's face.

Unfortunately, in some households, the effects of secondhand smoke are almost as bad.

In fact, secondhand smoke has been found to cause lung cancer in healthy non-smokers and can cause increased respiratory illness in people of all ages.

Because their lungs and airways are still developing, young children are especially vulnerable to secondhand smoke. When a parent smokes at home, babies are much more likely to get bronchitis, pneumonia or other lung diseases.

Each year, secondhand smoke causes between 150,000 and 300,000 cases of these diseases in children under 18 months old. That means that every two to three minutes, a young child gets a respiratory infection caused by secondhand smoke.

Secondhand smoke even affects a child's ability to learn. Children exposed to even small amounts of secondhand smoke may have more difficulty learning to read than other children. When children are exposed to higher levels of secondhand smoke, math and conceptual skills suffer, as well.

"Children of smokers get ear infections more often, get more colds and respiratory illnesses, and are more likely to grow up to be smokers themselves," says Dr. Jane Baird, a family practice physician at High Point Medical Clinic. "Secondhand smoke isn't just a physical health issue, it's also a behavioral health issue."

One of the well-known dangers of secondhand smoke in children is asthma. Exposure to secondhand smoke can worsen a child's asthma symptoms or even trigger an asthma attack. Secondhand smoke irritates the bronchial tubes and triggers the tightening that causes an asthma attack. Asthma can result in trips to the emergency room and missed days of school or work. In King County alone, 21,000 children and 124,000 adults currently have asthma—that's more than enough people to fill up Qwest Stadium twice.

dium twice.

In December, the Indoor Clean Air Act took effect across Washington State. The law prohibits smoking in all public indoor areas, such as restaurants, bars, bowling alleys and other businesses. The law also prohibits smoking near the entrances of these businesses.

While critics have said that the law is too strict, it was approved by 63 percent of Washington state voters in last November's elections. Why? Voters know the dangers of secondhand smoke.

Secondhand smoke is the smoke from someone else's cigarette, cigar or pipe. It can come directly from the lit end of the cigarette, cigar or pipe, or it can be exhaled by the person who is smoking. Secondhand smoke is toxic and contains 200 different poisons and a total of 4,000 chemicals.

What can you do about secondhand smoke? If you smoke, smoke outside. Smoking indoors, even in a separate room or with the window open, exposes your family to secondhand smoke. Better yet, quit smoking. Quitting smoking is hard, but it's the single best thing you can do for your health. It's also very important to the health of those around you. With the indoor smoking ban in effect, you may find that now is a good time to quit. Talk to your doctor about quitting smoking or call the Tobacco Quit Line at 1-877-270-STOP (1-877-270-7867).

In King County, there are many resources available for families affected by asthma. If you would like assistance in addressing asthma at home, contact an Asthma Community Health Worker at (206) 205-0523. To find out if your family may qualify for asthma-friendly housing at High Point, contact Denise at Neighborhood House at (206) 923-3266.

Gaea Haymaker is a community health educator at High Point Medical and Dental Clinic, a Puget Sound Neighborhood Health Center. PSNHC is a non-profit organization providing quality medical and dental services for people in Seattle and King County regardless of their ability to pay.

Housing Advocacy Day helps get state housing bill passed



PHOTO BY RHONDA HUE

Rep. Larry Springer from the 45th district addresses the crowd at Housing Advocacy Day, where the theme was "Every day is a rainy day without a roof overhead."

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Hundreds of advocates and housing providers traveled to Olympia from all over the state last month to speak up to their state policy makers on the issues that affect low-income housing.

The 12th Annual Housing Advocacy Day was sponsored by Washington Low-Income Housing Alliance and Washington State Coalition for the Homeless. The event offered the chance for new and seasoned advocates alike to obtain information, gain advocacy skills and get face-time with state Representatives.

The main goal of the day was to advocate for affordable housing for all. Advocates also pressed for funding to ensure continued services for the homeless, disabled, those living with HIV/AIDS and victims of domestic violence.

Participants attended meetings with their senators and district representatives, presenting information about how affordable housing has helped low-income people gain self-sufficiency.

The issue on the forefront of the agenda was HB 2418, The Home Security Fund bill.

If passed, this bill will ensure a \$100 million supplement for the Housing Trust Fund, an increased investment in the Washington Families Fund, and \$4.8 million for the Energy Matchmakers program.

These programs leverage public funds with private dollars to ease burdens on the low-income community, through housing development, support services and reduc-

tions in energy costs.

Housing Authority Deputy Executive Director Andrew Lofton attended Housing Advocacy Day to express his support for the funding.

Lisa Cipollone, director of rental assistance and advocacy at SHA, has also been advocating for the bill, both at the February event, and in other ways.

"This money goes directly into developing and supporting programs that enable low-income people to obtain and remain in safe, decent affordable housing," she said. "It was inspiring to see the number of people who showed such passionate support for housing issues."

Long-time housing advocate and SHA employee, Rhonda Hue, also believes Housing Advocacy Day makes a big difference for those who rely on assistance to meet their housing needs.

"Last year, we focused on raising the state's housing fund from \$80 million to \$100 million," said Hue, who has attended the event for the past five years. "Housing Advocacy Day helped make that happen. This year, I am confident our efforts will help get HB 2418 passed."

So far, Hue's prediction is proving to be true. The House of Representatives passed the bill 72 to 24, and sent it to the Senate for approval.

"Asking your legislators for their support really works," Hue said. "If everyone wrote, e-mailed or called their representatives, imagine the power we'd have at our fingertips to help others!"



One to grow on

Garden tips for community gardeners

By ANZA MUENCHOW

Special to the Voice

We have had heavy rains in January and snowfall in February. But now it is March and we can start planting our 2006 food gardens. Finally!

But first, we need to talk about improving your soil. You may want to test your soil if you have a new garden spot, or if you think your harvests last year were poor.

Try using the simple test kit available at most nurseries. Take the soil sample from the center of your beds, just a few inches below the surface, or take several soil samples and mix them well in a clean bucket, taking a scoop from the center using a clean tool.

Notice the soil pH level. Most Northwest gardens will need lime added once every two to three years, except where you grow berries or potatoes.

Adding lime is especially important for heavy soils where you grow Brassicas (broccoli, cabbage, arugula, choy, mustard, etc.) When you purchase your lime, read the directions on the package and add the recommended amounts, usually five or six pounds (pints) per 100 square feet.

Now, you need to add your compost. Add six or more inches of leaf mold, aged manure or purchased landscape compost like Cedar Grove. Mix this organic matter into the top foot of top soil through all your garden beds.

There is a technique called double digging, where you take the top foot of soil off the end of your bed, put it in a wheel barrow and loosen the soil for a foot below that.

Then take the top foot of soil from the center section of the narrow bed, mix in compost and put that mix on the lower soil you just loosened. Continue this digging technique down the long narrow bed until you reach the end, then use the top soil and compost from the wheel barrow.

Don't walk on the bed, and it will stay loose for many years to come. Don't worry about double digging all your beds the first year. Strengthen your back by doing one or two.

O.K., let's get to planting. If we have a typical spring, March is when you can plant onions, carrots, arugula, mustards, radishes, turnips, spinach, beets, Swiss chard, peas, cilantro and parsley.

Don't use onion seeds in March—buy onion sets or starts for an early onion crop. The arugula, radish, mustard and turnip

seed should sprout up within a week of planting. Watch for slug damage, because an early slug can wipe out a whole row in a single night.

If you crack the round seed coats of the cilantro seeds with a crunching pressure, they will sprout faster. Parsley seed likes to be chilled for a couple weeks in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for quicker germination.

Parsley is slow, but well worth it. In fact, it has become one of my staple vegetables. It seems all my salads are better with a cup of chopped parsley, especially potato salad, macaroni salad, bean salad and even tossed green salads. Parsley has very few pests and lasts a year in your garden. The second year the parsley plants will shoot up a seed head, so keep planting fresh and save your seeds from year to year.

Enjoy your early spring planting! We can discuss the later seed plantings next month.

Anza Muenchow is an avid gardener and a volunteer with P-Patch. You can reach her at mahafarm@whidbey.net.

Community notes

Achieve your dreams

Hispanic/Latino high school students, graduates, their families and friends are invited to attend a free open house at Seattle Central Community College on Thursday, March 9.

The event takes place from 6 to 9 p.m. in the first floor Atrium cafeteria on the college campus.

The evening features food, door prizes, campus tours and information about college programs and services, including financial aid, scholarships and resources for undocumented students.

A mini career fair, with business representatives is also part of the evening's activities.

The college is located at 1701 Broadway Ave. on the corner of Broadway Avenue and Pine Street.

For more information call Candace Oehler at (206) 587-5487

The mission of the Seattle Housing Authority is to enhance the Seattle community by creating and sustaining decent, safe and affordable living environments that foster stability and self-sufficiency for people with low incomes.

Yelser says goodbye
LONGTIME FRIEND MOVES ON
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SHA NEWS

March
2006

News and information about Seattle's neighborhoods

Mayor seeking resident commissioner for SHA board

By VOICE STAFF

As High Point resident Judy Fay prepares for the end of nine years of service on the Seattle Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, Mayor Greg Nickels is beginning the process of finding a new resident to replace her.

Fay has played an important role in the future of High Point, working on behalf of residents throughout the HOPE VI redevelopment of this community.

The seven-member Board of Commissioners, from which she is retiring, is responsible for approving the Housing Authority's annual budget and for setting the specific policies that guide SHA's operations.

Commissioners are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Seattle City Council. If this is something of interest to you, now is your chance, as the Mayor's office is in the process of finding a new resident commissioner.

This volunteer position with the Seattle Housing Authority requires an individual to commit 10 to 12 hours per month in preparing for and attending meetings.

The board meets monthly on the third Monday of the month beginning at 5 p.m. Meetings usually last up to two hours.

The meeting agenda and background materials are mailed to each commissioner during the prior week. In addition to regular board meetings, commissioners are expected to attend public hearings and occasional briefings.

Mayor Nickels is seeking a person who has a demonstrated interest in housing issues in Seattle, is willing to commit the necessary time and effort and can serve as an effective liaison between the Housing Authority and the broader resident community.

For an application packet, please contact Claudia Arana at the City of Seattle at (206) 615-0958. You can also e-mail her at Claudia.Arana@seattle.gov.

Applications may be downloaded from the City of Seattle's Web site at <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/boards.htm> or from the Seattle Housing Authority's Web site at <http://www.seattlehousing.org>.

The closing date for accepting application materials is Friday, March 17.

Policy advisory committee for senior buildings on the way

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Do you live in a Seattle Senior Housing Program building? Do you want to have a say when policies that affect you are being drafted?

If you answered "yes" to either of these questions, we are looking for you!

The Housing Authority is creating a new forum for residents to provide input and advice on major policy decisions that impact the SSHP. This new forum is modeled after the traditional Joint Policy Advisory Committee which provides guidance and review of draft policies for the Low-Income Public Housing program.

This newly-formed group, called the SSHP JPAC, will be composed of two members from each SSHP community and will meet semi-annually to review draft policies, provide input and share information members have gathered from their respective communities.

In 2005, JPAC members advised SHA about policies that had to do with the public housing dwelling lease, house rules, community room usage and occupancy standards.

The senior buildings have been represented on the JPAC since its inception, however, representation has declined as the focus has moved towards discussing policies that have a greater impact on public housing communities.

The Housing Authority was advised that SSHP needed its own forum, hence the creation of the SSHP JPAC.

Each duly elected resident council is entitled to have a representative and an alternate on the committee. If there is no duly-elected council in your community, you are still welcome to be part of the SSHP JPAC.

For an application, please contact Vicky Yuki at (206) 615-3594 or by e-mail at vyuki@seattlehousing.org. The deadline for applications is Friday, May 5.

Over the next several months, resident Please see "SSHP JPAC" on page 2

homeWorks advisory committee forming

By VOICE STAFF

In response to a request by the Resident Action Council, the Seattle Housing Authority has agreed to form an advisory committee for homeWorks, the agency's \$36 million high-rise redevelopment project.

"We understand that the success of the (project) is defined by both the physical construction work (and) how we meet the ultimate goal of improving the lives of residents who live there," said SHA's Senior Development Manager Stephanie Van Dyke in a letter to RAC members.

The Housing Authority has suggested that representatives from each of the eight buildings involved in the first phase of the project, including Green Lake Plaza, Lictonwood, International Terrace, Beacon Tower, Ballard House, Capitol Park, Olive Ridge and Harvard Court, sit on the committee.

The committee will also include SHA property management staff, homeWorks construction management staff and one or two members of the Resident Action Council, which is an elected body of high-rise residents.

An advisory committee for the second phase of the project would be established as that phase goes forward.

Resident Action Council members said that they asked SHA to form the committee in hopes that resident oversight would help avoid the disruption, delays and headaches that have occurred during past Housing Authority renovation projects.

Council members have also enlisted the support of attorney Julie Wade, who will represent the residents' interests free of charge as the renovations progress.

Housing Authority officials have also invited her to sit on the committee.

In 2004, Wade helped residents of Olive Ridge secure a month's free rent from SHA after walls in their building were torn out and pipes were exposed in some places for more than eight months.

"People are worried that SHA won't listen to us," said RAC President Doug Morrison. "But if we have some legal backing, they're more apt to listen and to take some positive action."

Morrison added that he is pleased that the Housing Authority responded so quickly to RAC's request.

"Even though residents may have a problem with some of the construction work, it still needs to be done," he said.

If you are interested in volunteering to sit on the advisory committee, contact the RAC office at (206) 322-2257.



PHOTO BY SVEN KOEHLER

Green Lake Plaza residents Terry Dougherty (right) and Glenn Slemmer discuss the newest homeWorks information with Martha Berry, one of many service providers who are keeping informed about the project.

homeWorks FAQ

As homeWorks construction gets underway this month at Green Lake Plaza and Lictonwood, many residents are curious about what the project will mean for them.

If you have a question that you'd like answered, call the homeWorks hotline at (206) 615-3534. Leave your personal information and SHA will give you a call back. We'll also publish the answers to the most commonly asked questions here in The Voice.

Let us know if you don't want your question to appear in The Voice. We'll be happy to answer it regardless.

Q: Who is the homeWorks contractor?

A: W.G. Clark Construction is a Seattle company founded in 1910. It is a third-generation, family-owned business with 200 employees and a reliable history of completing quality projects on time.

Q: Is it true that these renovations will make the buildings ready for private condominiums?

A: No. The reason that the Seattle Housing Authority is undertaking these renovations is to keep the buildings working as low-income housing for years to come.

Q: I've heard my building is part of homeWorks, but no construction has started yet. What's up?

A: Each building will get a full update with meetings, flyers and informational bulletin boards at least two months before the work starts.

Q: My building is scheduled to be undergoing renovations for many months. Will work be going on in my unit the entire time?

A: No, the work will be carefully planned Please see "homeWorks" on page 2

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“Zines” help home buyers understand neighborhood character, amenities

By CLAIRE McDANIEL
Seattle Housing Authority

As Seattle Housing Authority and its consultant Fusionpartners began to consider how to attract buyers to the new homes at NewHolly, Rainier Vista and High Point, they realized that a standard sales brochure would not work.

The goal was to help prospective buyers understand the dynamics of the neighborhood so that Housing Authority residents' new neighbors would appreciate the incredible diversity of these communities.

This analysis led to the idea for a small magazine or “zine” rather than a traditional community sales brochure.

The format would be a mini-magazine with about 48 pages of content.

The stories and graphics would be presented in an upbeat, lively and compelling style based on interviews with local merchants, residents and community leaders.

The zine would be a valuable resource for everyone in the community, renters and buyers alike. “Ads” for the specific homes being offered for sale would be interspersed throughout the publication.

A mix of illustration and photography would keep the pages interesting and readable. The seven-inch square format proved to be cost-efficient for printing and binding, and at the same time distinctive.

The zines have multiple goals, including boosting sales by providing real, positive stories, providing an accurate portrayal of the area's amenities and demonstrating the richness of a diverse, mixed-income, master-planned community.

So far, zines have been produced for Othello Station (NewHolly), Rainier Vista and High Point. The Othello Station zine has been recognized by the Public Relations Society of America as an award-winning publication.

The partners in the homes-for-sale program have been unanimously enthusiastic



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Zines about Seattle Housing Authority's mixed-income communities can be found in newspaper boxes around the neighborhood.

and appreciative of the zines.

They have been distributed in local neighborhood stores and businesses, where they are available free of charge, and they are also available on site in brightly colored yellow newspaper boxes.

Demand for the zines remains high, and vendors have willingly accepted new stock delivered personally by the Housing Authority every four to six weeks.

The neighborhood zines not only tell readers how to find the best places to eat, where to ride their bikes and how to get to the closest parks and art galleries, they also make people proud to live in the neighborhood.

If you would like a copy of the zine for your neighborhood, look for it around the community, or read it on the Web at <http://www.othellostation.com>, <http://www.thehighpoint.com> or <http://www.rainiervista.com>.

homeWorks

Continued from front page

to ensure that contractors will be in your unit for as short a time as possible. You will be given a schedule in advance.

For example, in some buildings the entire project will take nine months, but most of the work in each unit will be done in about three weeks.

Q: I know there will be work done on the plumbing in the bathroom and kitchen. Are we getting new refrigerators or bathtubs?

A: Most of the work will be done on the water pipes behind the walls. The project does not include funds for new appliances or fixtures.

Q: I hear you are working on the ventilation system. Will I get a new fan above my stove?

A: The work on the ventilation system will be work that improves the air quality of the whole building. You will keep the same fan in the range hood above your stove.

Q: What is the difference between homeWorks and other SHA construction projects?

A: We have learned from the problematic projects at Olive Ridge and Lictonwood, and homeWorks is being handled differently. It has strict deadlines and contractors are required to do the work in a way that makes it easy for residents to live in their homes during construction.

SSHP JPAC

Continued from front page

meetings will be held at each building to discuss the new committee and answer questions. Representatives will be selected from the applications received and members will be notified by the end of May. The first meeting will be held in June.

The Housing Authority strongly encour-

ages resident feedback about policies.

The JPAC “is a chance for SHA staff and residents to dialogue about draft policies before they go to the Board of Commissioners for final approval,” said Housing Operations Director Don Ashlock.

The new committee will be an opportunity for SSHP residents to have the same input and influence, he added.

Maintenance charge schedule to be updated

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Seattle Housing Authority has updated the list of dollar amounts residents can be charged for damage to their unit caused by something other than ordinary wear and tear.

A copy of the proposed revisions to the policy and the charge schedule is available at your management office.

The final policy and schedule will be posted once the Housing Authority has had a chance to review resident comments and consider changes. Notices of the policy change were posted in buildings and comments were due by March 1.

The “charge schedule” has been updated to reflect the actual cost of sending someone out to repair the damage and the costs of needed materials. That's why some of the charges on the list seem high, said Virginia Felton, Seattle Housing Authority spokesperson.

It is important to stress that Housing Authority residents are not charged for routine maintenance expenses, she added. Of the approximately 30,000 maintenance calls the Housing Authority completed last

year, only about 1,000 resulted in a charge to a tenant.

Residents are charged only for the repair of damages to SHA property that were caused by something other than ordinary wear and tear.

These could be damages that occurred after a tenant ignored a maintenance problem, damages that could have been prevented if a tenant had properly used security devices provided by SHA, or damages that are the result of the tenant making unauthorized changes to the apartment.

For example, a resident might be charged if SHA has to unclog a toilet blocked by a hair brush, toy or other object. Residents could also be charged if SHA has to repair holes in the walls of their unit or replace broken bedroom doors, damaged window blinds, baseboard heater covers or missing electrical socket covers.

Any repair not included in the uniform charge schedule is charged according to the cost of labor and materials for the repair. SHA updates the charge schedule annually to reflect actual costs of labor and materials.

Annual plan approved

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Seattle Housing Authority is one of about 30 housing authorities across the country participating in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's “Moving To new Ways” program.

Under the program, SHA has the opportunity to test innovative methods to improve housing to better meet local needs. In December, the agency's Board of Commissioners adopted the fiscal year 2005 MTW Annual Report, which summarizes the year's activities.

According to the report, in 2005, SHA housed 11,861 households, including those using Section 8 vouchers, those in public housing and residents in the Seattle Senior Housing Program. The number of people served slightly decreased from 12,027 households in 2004 due to attrition in voucher participants and the sale of Market House, which had 51 units, to another low-income housing provider.

The Housing Authority's public housing program saw a net increase of 140 households due to leasing in NewHolly.

More than 11,000 households were on one or more waiting lists for housing assistance at the end of the year.

The Job Connection, SHA's employment services program, placed 150 residents in jobs with an average hourly wage of \$10.33. Eighty one percent of these positions were full-time and 63 percent had benefits.

The rent policies and occupancy standards were changed in the public housing program. The rent policy changes were intended to strengthen self-sufficiency incentives and make the policies easier for residents to understand and for SHA to administer. The Housing Authority also updated the public housing lease and house rules.

Several technology initiatives were tested or implemented to improve service to residents. An automated monthly check-in for applicants on the wait-list was tested and will likely be rolled out in 2006.

SHA also started a new high-tech billing system for water consumption at NewHolly, Rainier Vista and High Point to improve the accuracy and timeliness of water bills.

The Housing Authority's high-rise revitalization project homeWorks, achieved several major milestones this year. A program manager was hired, a design consultant was contracted for all three phases of the project, a general contractor was selected for the first phase and tax-credit investment proposals were received.

In addition, SHA sold 64 Scattered-Sites units and purchased 40 two-, three- and four-bedroom units to replace those sold. Nine one-bedroom units were also purchased.

The rehabilitation of the Ritz Apartments, 31 units of workforce housing in the Central Area, was completed.

About The Voice

The Voice is a monthly newspaper published by Neighborhood House with financial support from the Seattle Housing Authority.

The Voice is edited by Neighborhood House staff with help from SHA. It strives to provide a forum for objective news and information of interest to low-income people and those living in SHA communities.

The Voice welcomes articles, letters to the editor and columns from readers. If you'd like to submit an article, or if you have a question about anything you've read in this publication, feel free to contact Voice Editor Stacy Schwandt at (206) 461-8430 ext. 227 or by e-mail at stacys@nhwa.org.

If you have questions about SHA-related stories, you may also contact SHA Communications Director Virginia Felton at (206) 615-3506 or by e-mail at vfelton@seattlehousing.org.

You can also mail submissions to: The Voice, Neighborhood House, 905 Spruce St. #200, Seattle, WA 98104. Please include your name and contact information on your submission.

All submissions are subject to editing for accuracy, style and length.

POINT OF VIEW

NEWS ABOUT THE SEATTLE SENIOR HOUSING PROGRAM AND SEATTLE'S HIGH-RISE COMMUNITIES

Pleasant Valley celebrates resident's 90th birthday

By JEAN ANDERSON
SSHP Advocates II

When Hazel Bauer moved into Pleasant Valley Plaza, the Seattle Senior Housing Program building in Magnolia was about a year old.

This year as she marks her 22nd year there, she also celebrates her 90th birthday.

Bauer, Pleasant Valley's Resident Council president, spent her early years on a Kansas farm. She later lived in Michigan and Nebraska before settling in Seattle, where she worked for an insurance company until

she retired in the 1980s.

In retirement, Bauer has been a tutor for the Seattle Public Schools and continues to work as a poll judge for the King County elections board.

She is also a lay minister in her church, where she has served in various capacities, including Director of Christian Education for Western Washington. In 2005, Hazel was elected to the Board of The Advocates II, which represents residents of SSHP buildings.

To celebrate her birthday, Bauer's family hosted a party last month in the Pleasant Valley Community Room.

Residents learn how to keep air clean



PHOTO BY SVEN KOEHLER

International Terrace residents Guiguan Chen (left) and Tai Shia Chao examine a pillow case that keeps dust mites and other allergens away from your face, which was given as a door prize at the air quality meeting.

West Town View elects council

By TOM KUBICK
West Town View Secretary

The residents of West Town View are proud to announce the election of their community council Executive Committee, which took place in late January.

Seattle Housing Authority Community Builder Brett Houghton may have been detained for dispensing ballot pens with vanishing ink, but Betty Sullivan, from the League of Women Voters, dismissed the allegations due to lack of credible or circumstantial evidence and declared the election official.

The elected officers are: President Tascaie Jennings, Vice President Emily Abbey, Secretary Darlene Franks, Corresponding Secretary Tom Kubick, Treasurer Bob Harrington and At Large Representative John Nesbitt.



PHOTO BY BOB HARRINGTON

Seattle Housing Authority Community Builder Brett Houghton hands a ballot to John Nesbitt.

Mayor visits Pinehurst Court



PHOTO BY STACY SCHWANDT

City of Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels visited Pinehurst Court during coffee hour last month as a part of a walking tour of the neighborhood. He is seen here accepting letters from members of Pinehurst Court's Russian community. Through an interpreter, the residents asked Nickels questions about Medicare, food stamps and immigration issues. Pinehurst Court is a Seattle Senior Housing Program building.

By CASEY COULOMBE
American Lung Association of Washington

Indoor air quality is an issue that affects everyone. On average, we spend about 90 percent of our time indoors, and the air in our homes can actually be more polluted than the air outside.

Things like dust, mold, lead and household cleaning products all contribute to bad indoor air. However, there are many things we can do to limit our exposure to these pollutants which cost little or nothing.

To help residents tackle this issue, the American Lung Association of Washington, the Community Health Education Foundation and the Environmental Protection Agency teamed up to provide presentations in six Seattle Housing Authority buildings.

Presenters told residents that stopping dust from entering the home can be easier than they think. Putting a high quality walk-off mat (with ridges made of heavy duty material) at the front door and taking off shoes when you enter definitely work.

Vacuuming at least once a week can remove the "deep dust" in your carpets that may contain very high levels of lead, pesticides and other chemicals. Damp dusting with a wet cloth will reduce dust and also limit exposure to hazardous chemicals contained in many household cleaners.

Mold is a big issue here in the Northwest. Not only is it unsightly to look at, but mold

can also cause respiratory problems and trigger asthma attacks. Mold needs two things to survive: something to eat (dust or paint chips) and water to drink (usually in the form of moisture in the air).

The easiest way to eliminate mold from your home is to remove it by using soap, warm water and elbow grease.

Please consider not using bleach. The idea is not to kill the mold (which is extremely difficult) but rather to remove it. In order to kill the mold the bleach would have to be in contact with it for so long that the chemicals would begin to damage the surface material. In addition, vapors from bleach can be harmful to the lungs and irritate the skin.

The next step is to address the problem of mold growth at the easiest source to control—the moisture in the air.

Using exhaust fans in the kitchen and bathroom that are vented to the outside, maintaining indoor temperatures between 60 and 68 degrees F and opening windows and doors to air out your home will help to cut down the amount of moisture, and therefore mold, in your home.

For more information on things you can do to make the air in your home cleaner, or to schedule a free in-home environmental assessment, contact the American Lung Association of Washington's Master Home Environmentalist Program at (206) 441-5100.

Disaster training takes place at Tri Court this month

By VOICE STAFF

When an article published in the Seattle Times pointed out that very few low-income communities had completed disaster-preparedness training, Tri Court residents Mary Jo Cetak and Anthony Cameron got to work.

The high-rise residents contacted Seattle Disaster Aid and Response Teams, the organization that has trained over 500 community groups to respond to disasters.

Thanks to their efforts, Tri Court will host the first of five SDART training sessions on Thursday, March 9 at 5 p.m. in the Tri Court community room.

All are welcome to take part in the inter-

active, hands-on training.

Cetak has said that she hopes the training will help residents work together to create a plan to protect themselves.

"With so many different personal needs, there remains the glaring question: how can we best mobilize each household in the face of disaster?" she said.

The training, with its simulations of evacuation drills and rescue operations, will be a start. Residents will learn the importance of counting heads from a roster and checking off all who have arrived at a designated meeting place.

"What follows next?" she asked. "Come to the training to learn more."

HIGH POINT HERALD

NEWS ABOUT THE HIGH POINT COMMUNITY

Neighborhood center likely in High Point's future

By VOICE STAFF

Planning is underway for a neighborhood center in the redeveloped High Point community, which could be open as soon as late 2008.

The center is envisioned as a focal point for the social life of the community.

It will house community meeting and gathering spaces, youth recreational activities, educational programs for children, youth and adults and a small amount of retail space.

The Seattle Housing Authority and Neighborhood House will work as partners to build and raise money for the center.

Roughly \$7 million will be needed for the project. The Housing Authority will donate the land valued at \$1.5 million and contribute an additional \$1.5 million toward construction costs. The remaining \$4 million will be raised from both governmental and private sources.

When built, the center will be run by an independent, community-based nonprofit established by SHA and Neighborhood House.

It is expected that there will be 1,300 youths living in the redeveloped High Point neighborhood when it is completely built. Providing educational and enrichment activities for them will be a focus of the center.

Neighborhood House Executive Director Mark Okazaki said he was convinced

that the center should focus on services for youth after Neighborhood House's new center opened in Rainier Vista last year.

"When I saw kids racing to our center on their bikes after school let out, I knew the building was a success. They were so anxious to use our computers that they just dropped their bikes at our front door," he said. "I don't mind having a stack of bikes in front of our building when I know their owners are exercising their minds and their imaginations. When we build the High Point Neighborhood Center, we'll be sure to include a bike rack."

In fact, SHA has been working with a youth advisory group to ensure that the space is designed with everything the young people need.

More than 40 percent of facility space is dedicated purposely for youth, including Head Start classrooms, space for youth tutoring programs and a teen center.

By 2009, almost 4,000 residents will live in High Point. Nearly one-third of the families will earn less than 30 percent of the area median income.

For adults, the Neighborhood Center will provide job placement services, case management, eviction prevention services, multicultural family counseling and additional support services.

The center will be centrally located and accessible to all residents without requiring transportation.

Senator Patty Murray visits High Point

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

The question on Senator Patty Murray's radar in late January was, "How do agencies work together to provide housing for Seattle's low-income residents?"

To answer that question, leaders from the Seattle Housing Authority, the Washington State Housing Finance Commission and the City of Seattle met with the senator to brief her on their tactics.

They took Murray on a tour of what many people consider a real success story—the High Point redevelopment.

Tom Tierney, SHA's executive director, said the High Point redevelopment shows how the creative combination of various funding programs and initiatives can spur new low-income housing and private investment.

Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development served as seed money for this project. The Housing Authority also drew from the Housing Trust Fund and used tax-credit equity administered by the Housing Finance Commission to get the project off the ground.

Murray was impressed with the collaboration.

"Preserving and creating new affordable housing is a challenge, especially in Seattle and King County," Murray said. "Fortunately, the region has...agencies that work



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Senator Patty Murray tours the redeveloped High Point neighborhood in late January.

closely together to make a positive impact in people's lives. My tour of High Point... was another reminder of how critical it is for the federal government to be a strong partner with our local and state housing agencies."

Lisa Cippollone, head of SHA's rental assistance programs, said she was pleased the senator was interested in learning more about the issue.

"It was a rare opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities of the work that we all do in providing low-income housing," she said.

Don't miss out on boom in construction industry



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

A construction team works on the High Point demolition.

By JEFF THUNGC
Seattle Housing Authority

The time to get into the construction field is now.

"The need for talented people entering and staying in the construction workforce couldn't be any greater," says Melinda Nichols, chair of the Washington State Apprenticeship Training Council.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that more than a million jobs will be available in the construction industry by 2012 because of the expected retirement of scores

of baby boomers in the next 5 to 10 years.

According to the Washington State Employment Security Department, the average annual growth in the construction trade is expected to be about 16 percent through 2012. The overall construction workforce demand will exceed the supply of qualified workers. Many contractors have already experienced shortage of skilled workers.

The Seattle Housing Authority's employment service program, The Job Connection, is working hard to spread the news about this booming industry.

The Housing Authority's HOPE VI re-

developments and its upcoming high-rise revitalizations will demand skilled workers from the local community. Aside from SHA projects, there are other local projects including Sound Transit's light rail construction, the multi-million dollar revitalization at Harborview Medical Center and the King County Housing Authority's Greenbridge redevelopment.

Residents of SHA interested in these opportunities need to come and register with The Job Connection.

During the first phase of the High Point redevelopment, there was a shortage of qualified candidates from the resident pool.

The Job Connection is encouraging residents to consult with its staff on how to go about qualifying for the positions, many of which will become available in the second phase of construction at High Point, which is expected to begin in the spring of 2006.

The Job Connection works with various apprenticeship programs in the Seattle area and would be able to help residents enroll in these programs. The question is not, "Will there be a job for me?" The real question is, "Will I be ready for the jobs?"

As the statistics show, there will be jobs for years to come. Who wants to be part of this growth? If you are the right candidate, we want to talk to you and help you succeed. Contact our Section 3 Coordinator, Rickie Robinson, or The Job Connection at (206) 937-3292.

Jeff Thungc is a Job Placement Specialist for the Seattle Housing Authority.

Community notes

Library expands hours

Book-loving High Point residents now have more time to spend in the public libraries thanks to a 2006 budget increase.

Late last month the High Point branch of Seattle Public Library extended its hours. The branch now closes at 8 p.m. instead of 6 p.m. on Thursdays and is open from noon to 5 p.m. on Sundays.

Interested in a walking group?

Join Mary Becker of Sound Steps to talk about forming a walking group in High Point.

The meeting will take place on March 13 from 1 to 2 p.m. at the High Point branch of Seattle Public Library. Snacks will be provided.

Interpretation will be available in Vietnamese, Cambodian, Tigrigna and Amharic. For more information call Rose Long at (206) 923-3266.

Join the Cambodian tea group

A tea group for Cambodian residents of High Point has recently formed. The group will meet next on March 9 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Neighborhood Service Center, 6564 32nd Ave. For more information, call (206) 267-0624.

RAINIER VISTA NEWS

NEWS ABOUT THE RAINIER VISTA COMMUNITY

Demolition of east side homes to begin soon



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Soon all of Rainier Vista's old housing will be torn down.

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

While construction work continues on the west side of Rainier Vista, the old housing on the east side of Martin Luther King Jr. Way has been completely fenced off and is awaiting demolition.

The Seattle Housing Authority and the Rainier Vista Citizen Review Committee hosted a community meeting last month to talk about how the second phase of construction could impact the surrounding neighborhoods.

According to SHA's Senior Project Manager Ed Rose, over 30 people attended the meeting.

"While everyone wasn't enthusiastic about the inconvenience of construction, it was clear (they) really appreciated the fact that we were meeting with them to specifically answer their questions," he said.

A follow-up meeting will occur within the next couple of months.

Plans for the east side develop

Infrastructure work on the east side of Rainier Vista will begin in the fall and construction will likely begin in 2007.

Meanwhile, SHA has hired 3 Kings, the company that did the demolition work on the west side, to do the same work on the east side. They are expected to begin the job in the spring and to finish by early summer.

Because part of the demolition work includes the disposal of asbestos, SHA checked the contractor's references very carefully.

3 Kings has received some notices of safety violations in the past, but SHA took care to ensure that they now have a good record. The state's Labor and Industries office gave them a clean recommendation.

For additional assurance, several mutually-agreeable safeguards were added to the contract.

Housing Authority staff and architects are still working on the rental and for-sale housing configuration on the east side. The Boys & Girls Club is SHA's major development partner for this phase of work.

In 2005, both agencies had hopes of joining with the Salvation Army to build a large community center on the site. Unfortunately, this opportunity didn't materialize, and it was a case of "back to the drawing board" to redesign the community without the center.

As a result, the Boys & Girls Club has been working hard on plans for a new club facility, which will sit on the south side of Oregon Street, instead of to the north where it is now located.

The new site will include a large play field and parking for program participants. The remainder of the site south of Oregon Street will include a mix of housing and commercial space. The area north of Oregon Street will have housing and a small park.

Builders for the homes for sale that will be mixed into the community will be selected later this year.

In preparation for construction, SHA is also assembling a community advisory group to help with the identification and hiring of residents and members of minority groups for jobs created by the redevelopment. Housing Authority contracts include a provision (called Section 3) that requires contractors to hire low-income workers from the neighborhood.

West side construction continues

All of SHA's rental housing on the west side of Rainier Vista is finished, and everyone who was living on the east side has now been relocated.

However, it is obvious to anyone walking around the neighborhood that construction is still going on. Housing Resources Group expects to finish work on Genesee Housing (on the corner of Columbian Way and MLK, Jr. Way S.) in the next few months.

This apartment building will provide 50 apartments for low-income families and people living with disabilities including HIV/AIDS.

Many low-income seniors have already moved into Gamelin House, on the block south of Columbian Way. The commercial space on the building's ground floor already has two tenants—a real estate development firm called The Dwelling Company and an Allstate Insurance office.

Commercial builders are also in the process of building new homes for sale. The first sale was recently completed by Martha Rose Construction. The Dwelling Company and the Riley Group are also selling houses in Rainier Vista.

The Housing Authority's share of proceeds from these sales will help to build the rest of the low-income rental housing in the community.

Grant will pay for finishing touches on Central Park

BY BRENN A CASEY

Voice staff

Central Park, located directly across from the new Neighborhood House Rainier Vista Center, could easily become the focal point of the new neighborhood.

As such, Neighborhood House and City Year have set to work to ensure that it is as colorful and welcoming as the homes that surround it.

Right now, the park remains largely undeveloped and is enclosed by a chain link fence, but the commitment of the two organizations has guaranteed it a vital future.

"I remember going to Central Park in New York City and watching all of the interactions going on there," says Neighborhood House Executive Director Mark Okazaki. "There were chess tables and basketball courts, and I remember thinking, 'We need that in Rainier Vista.' There was energy there, and a real sense of community."

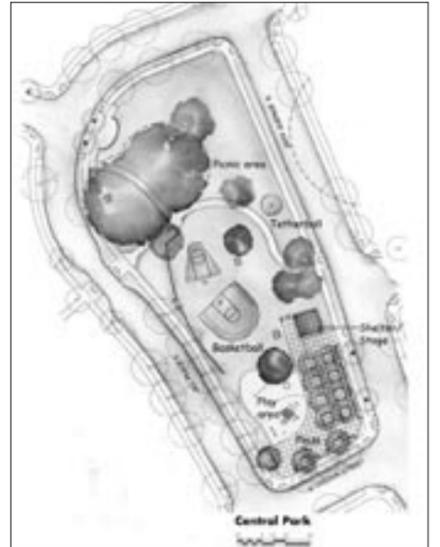
Last month, Safeco awarded the group a \$12,000 grant to complete work on the park, which will serve an estimated 3,000 residents and offer a public gathering space, walking paths and permanent game tables.

In addition, Central Park will house two half basketball courts, a tetherball court, play structures and a performance space.

Native plants will be used in the landscaping to create a green space where individuals and families can gather for athletic or social activities.

City Year, an arm of AmeriCorps dedicated to national youth service, is planning to get their corps and members of their mentoring program involved with the project.

Middle-school-aged youth will study public space development and then par-



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF NAKANO ASSOCIATES

When finished, Central Park will include a number of fun features.

icipate in work projects to help complete the park.

One of the largest work parties, to be held on April 22, National Youth Service Day, will be spearheaded by the City Year youth.

The Central Park Project also has the support of the Seattle Housing Authority, Rainier Vista Leadership Team, Feet First and many others.

"When it's completed it will be a pleasant place for people within the community to come and sit and socialize, it's going to be a place where people meet up," says Annie Edwards, a Neighborhood House family support worker in Rainier Vista. "Plus it will add beauty to the community!"

The park is expected to be completed by the end of July, and a grand opening celebration is scheduled for July 31.

Community meeting planned

BY VOICE STAFF

Please join Rainier Vista community members, Seattle Housing Authority's site management team and others to learn about resources available to those living in the Rainier Vista community.

Meet with a Seattle Police Department officer covering the Rainier Vista community and pick up contact information for the private security company that regularly patrols Rainier Vista.

Learn about the parking spots available in the neighborhood—especially the distinction between assigned lots and public streets.

Snoqualmie and McBride Court resi-

dents will be offered information about storage.

Finally, neighbors will be sharing tips for maintaining "curb appeal" in an otherwise beautiful Rainier Vista.

The meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 15 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Neighborhood House Rainier Vista Center, 4410 29th Ave. S.

This will be a great opportunity to get to know your neighbors. Refreshments will be served and interpretation will be provided in Vietnamese, Cambodian, Somali, Oromo and Amharic.

For more information, contact Dean Weitenhagen at (206) 721-2980.

Community notes

Free tax preparation services

Neighborhood House and United Way of King County are offering free tax preparation services at the NH Rainier Vista Center, 4410 29th Ave. S. on Saturday, March 4 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

This is a great opportunity to work with trained tax preparers to ensure you get the biggest refund possible.

Bring your Social Security number, W-2s for year 2005 and all necessary

documents to file the same day.

To register, call Tsegaye at (206) 461-4568 ext. 202/ 212 or come to the Rainier Vista Technology Center.

The Voice needs you

The Voice wants to learn more about your community. Please call Voice Editor Stacy Schwandt at (206) 461-8430 ext. 227, and let us know what's going on in your neighborhood.

NEWHOLLY NOTES

NEWS ABOUT THE NEWHOLLY COMMUNITY

Sewing with friends



PHOTO BY STACY SCHWANDT

Norma Ross (right) looks on as Balbina Sarabia prepares to sew elastic into a jumper.

By NORMA ROSS
Special to *The Voice*

Five women sat at tables in the craft room of the Family Center at NewHolly, carefully pinning small paper patterns to lengths of bright fabric.

It was the first step in making clothing for the therapeutic dolls used in the Atlantic Street Center counseling service, and the first time the women had used a sewing pattern.

Hawo Ali looked up and smiled. "In Somalia, they don't use patterns," she said. "They just do this." She pantomimed measuring up, down and across her body. "Then, they just do this," and she made cutting motions with her hands. "Then they sew it."

Some people in the U.S. sew that way, too. I'm not one of them, but despite such limitations, I've been teaching sewing at NewHolly since December 2004.

My class, Sewing With Friends, meets Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon.

Another limitation is that I speak only American English. My students are adding English to the two or three other languages they already speak. But language is a barrier only if you let it be one. We stumble over words, but heart and laughter are the same in any language.

One day, I heard "Norma" and turned to see who had spoken. The students laughed. "See. She can speak our language."

I became the sewing teacher at NewHolly after I heard Edith Chambers, ASC

executive director, speak at my church. She said the agency needed a volunteer to run the class.

I am a Clothing and Textile Advisor. CTA is an organization of the Washington State University Snohomish County Extension Office. It is made up of volunteers who love to sew and to share their knowledge. When I heard Edith's comment, I knew it was an opportunity for CTA.

Clothing and Textile Advisors are certified after a seven-week training course that includes teaching techniques. With people who grew up in less technological societies, I had to develop my own techniques.

For example, most did not know how to use straight pins. Nothing in the training mentioned that. Since we weren't building rockets to Pluto, straight pin technique was developed on the spot.

The students also teach me. Suka Ali, student and in-class helper, brought some rose red fabric to class. "I want to make a dress like this one," she said, indicating the dress she wore—without a pattern. I had never sewn anything without a pattern.

We laid the fabric on the table and she folded the dress in half lengthwise. We pinned the dress to the fabric, and I held my breath while Suka cut around it. A few weeks later, she had her dress.

The sewing class has fun, too. We had a party in December, and we've taken field trips to fabric stores and the stitchery expo in Puyallup. After all, the class is called "Sewing With Friends."

For more information, call (206) 723-4073.

NewHolly redevelopment draws closer to an end

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

This month marks a major milestone in the completion of all three phases of the NewHolly redevelopment. The rental housing construction contract with Walsh Construction Company has been completed.

After more than 10 years of hard work and support from the community, NewHolly now blends into the surrounding neighborhood, ending the stigma often associated with very large public housing sites.

The transformation of the neighborhood has been noticeable since the completion of the first phase, and NewHolly has gained recognition and admiration across the nation as a successful mixed-income community.

"It has been amazing," said Tom Tierney, the Housing Authority's executive director. "And it has happened because of the hard work and partnerships with residents, community members, contractors and SHA staff members."

The redevelopment efforts have brought the community a long way from what was originally known as Holly Park—a neighborhood of one- and two-story wood frame structures originally built for defense workers in World War II.

From the early 1950s through the mid-1990s, Holly Park provided public housing for low-income families.

Thanks in part to a \$48 million U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development "HOPE VI" grant, the completed NewHolly still provides public housing, along with a lot more.

NewHolly now offers 1,392 units of affordable homes for people living on a range of incomes. There are 530 apartments for people with very low incomes and 288 for people whose incomes are moderate, but below Seattle's median income. There are a total of 470 market-rate rentals and homes for sale, and about 104 of these homes for sale have been made available to low-income and first-time home buyers.

All 871 units of low-income housing at Holly Park prior to the redevelopment were replaced. Many of these are in NewHolly, while others were developed off-site.

A third of the land at NewHolly was sold to private home builders, who have built a



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Homes built by Polygon Northwest at Othello Station.

variety of homes in the community.

The sale of these homes has not only given people the opportunity to buy in-city homes across a wide price range, it has returned the land to the property tax rolls, generating revenue for the City of Seattle. Proceeds from the land sales are used by SHA to pay for new low-income and replacement housing.

"Today, NewHolly is a safer and friendlier neighborhood...(with) parks and playgrounds that serve as common areas and porches where neighbors can visit with one another," said Carter Hart, NewHolly's development project coordinator supervisor.

Although contracts with private home builders are complete, you will still see construction in the neighborhood, as many of these new homes will be for sale in 2006.

A few other projects are still underway. The market garden at the north end of Central Park began to be built last month.

The Harry Thomas Community Center at Lee House, which is behind the Othello Building, will be renovated and reopened this summer. The center will provide a community meeting space for residents and offices for small businesses or non-profits.

The Housing Authority will likely begin developing 3.6 acres east of the Othello Building when Sound Transit nears completion of its new LINK Light Rail station. This mixed-use site will include both homes and retail establishments.

Othello Station welcomes new community and market garden

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

This summer NewHolly residents will have the chance to enjoy fresh vegetables grown right in the community, by people in the community.

The P-Patch/Cultivating Communities Program began developing a new garden at the north end of Central Park last month.

This will be the eighth community garden in NewHolly and will be the new location for the garden previously located in the John C. Little, Sr. Park.

The garden will include two areas, one for community gardening and another for a market garden.

Fifteen 20-by-10 foot plots will be avail-

able in the community garden where interested residents can grow healthy food, plant flowers and come together with neighbors to learn about gardening.

The market garden area has larger plots and will offer gardeners the opportunity to earn income from the sale of produce.

Cultivating Communities staff members will meet with participants on a regular basis to provide gardening tips.

In addition to taking home food for their families, growers will receive 60 percent of the proceeds from produce sales. Forty percent goes to keeping the garden running.

Program Coordinator Martha Goodlett said there are many ways for residents to

get involved, including helping to build the gardens, which includes creating raised garden beds and spreading top soil.

Residents can also put their names on the waiting list for a plot of land, which will go first to those who help build the gardens. They are also invited to become market garden subscribers.

Subscribers receive weekly baskets of seasonal vegetables from the garden and pay \$475 for a full-share subscription and \$275 for a half-share subscription.

For more information on subscriptions or gardening, call Bunly Yun at (206) 684-8495, Martha Goodlett at (206) 684-0540 or Neguse Naizghi at (206) 760-3288.



PHOTO BY KARI SHERRIFF

Martha Goodlett and Community Garden Coordinator Bunly Yun stand in front of the new garden at Othello Station.

YESLER HAPPENINGS

NEWS ABOUT THE YESLER TERRACE COMMUNITY

Longtime Neighborhood House staff member moves on



PHOTO BY STACY SCHWANDT

Yesler Terrace volunteers join with Family Support Worker Annie Edwards (second from right) to say goodbye to LaBarbara Brooks (seated and showing peace sign).

By STACY SCHWANDT
Voice editor

It's not going to be easy for LaBarbara Brooks to move on.

"I feel like Yesler Terrace is my home," said the Neighborhood House family support worker who has spent more than 25 years serving members of the Yesler community.

From her very first day on the job at Neighborhood House, Brooks proved to have a deep dedication to making a difference in the community.

"It was snowing," she said of her first day. She was asked to carry boxes of food and holiday gifts to seniors in the neighborhood, and she was certain she was going to get the job done.

"I was there in my Santa hat. I was dragging those boxes through the snow, carrying them down the steps," she said. "I was knocking on doors, and, boy, were the seniors glad to see me."

For the next 15 years, many Yesler Terrace seniors became accustomed to Brooks' knocks and were always as glad to see her. Likewise, a team of dedicated residents have donated their time to Neighborhood House in part because of Brooks' advice, counsel and friendship.

"I think they're all a great bunch of people, and I will miss them," she said.

Brooks is moving to Neighborhood House's NewHolly office to join the Early Head Start team, where she'll be working in the home with families and children from birth to age three.

She said she decided to make the move in part because the agency has been having a hard time finding grant monies to pay for her position. Her work week had been cut from 40 to 36 hours a few years ago, and

there was no change in sight. After Brooks' transition to her new position, Annie Edwards, a NH family support worker stationed in Rainier Vista, will serve Yesler's English-speaking seniors twice a week.

"For me to get a new beginning," said Brooks, who, in her own words is 'no spring chicken,' "I feel that I'm blessed, I truly do."

She added that she was unsure about whether she was making the right decision until she attended a monthly meeting where families enrolled in Early Head Start come together to interact and socialize.

"It was light in there and all those little kids were playing, and I just really fell in love," she said.

Brooks said her new position will allow her to draw from her eight years as an elementary school teacher in Texas and from her experience as a new grandmother.

Of course, she'll also draw from the lessons she's learned from knocking on so many doors in Yesler Terrace.

Like the lesson on keeping a positive outlook that came from a bed-bound woman for whom Brooks often helped arrange medical appointments and prepare for apartment inspections.

"Before I'd leave, even though she was flat on her back, she had such an attitude about her that I would leave uplifted," Brooks said. "She was always laughing and telling jokes."

And she'll also draw from the lessons in perseverance that she learned from nearly all of her clients.

"They would tell me that they were old goats and you just couldn't beat them down," Brooks said with a smile. "I really appreciated watching some of the seniors hang in there and not give up. That's what it's really about."

Why waste a good thing? Recycle.

By SEATTLE UNIVERSITY NURSING STUDENTS

Did you know that recycling one plastic bottle can save the same amount of energy needed to power a 60-watt light bulb for six hours?

Since the beginning of the year, there has been a stronger emphasis on recycling correctly in the City of Seattle.

To do your civil duty while saving the environment, let's make recycling fun and easy! What's trash and what's treasure? Just because you can reuse it does not mean it is recyclable.

Items such as clothing, electronics, CDs, or household crafts can be donated to charitable organizations, but they cannot be recycled. Make sure it is plastic, metal, or paper before you put it in your bin.

Everything must be rinsed clean and dry to prevent the growth of mold. No lids can be recycled because they jam the recycling machines.

For a more comprehensive list of what is recyclable, look for the recycling guide in the Yesler Terrace community center or the recycling guide flyer put out by Seattle Public Utilities. Copies will soon be available in Neighborhood House and the Seattle Housing Authority office.

Forests remove carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, from the air which keeps the earth's temperature stable. Ninety-five percent of the original forest area in the U.S. has been cut down. How do you save the remaining 5 percent?

Recycling saves trees, reduces the need for landfills, and lowers the use of toxic chemicals that can cause cancer and are harmful to your health. Landfills contain toxic pollution which can escape into the air and water.

Remember, the next plastic bottle you recycle can save a lot of energy and contribute to a healthier earth.

Job search services available

By VOICE STAFF

Are you interested in looking for a job? Do you need help writing a cover letter or resume? Are you just interested in talking with someone about what career opportunities may be available to you?

Then come to The Job Connection, a Seattle Housing Authority program that helps people find jobs, enroll in ESL classes and take job training courses.

Job Placement Specialists Larry Hill and Van Vo (who speaks Vietnamese) are available at the Yesler Terrace office, 825 Yesler Way on the lower level, on Tuesday and Friday from 8 a.m. to noon.

All of their services are available to public housing residents in Yesler Terrace or the surrounding area. For more information or to set up an appointment, call (206) 344-5837 or (206) 484-6882.

Following is a translation for our Vietnamese readers:

Xin thông báo: Bắt đầu tháng 3/2006



Van Vo and Larry Hill

Ông Mỹ Larry Hill và Võ V. Vân (nói tiếng Việt Nam) nhân viên Seattle Housing, đến phục vụ Cộng Đồng Yesler Terrace

Thứ ba: 8 giờ sáng - 12 giờ trưa

Thứ sáu: 8 giờ sáng - 12 giờ trưa

Giúp quý vị viết "resume và cover letter" (lý lịch cá nhân và thư tỏ ý muốn làm việc) tìm công việc hợp sở thích, gửi học thêm Anh ngữ, học nghề...

Notes from the Manager

By JUDI CARTER

Senior Property Manager

It shouldn't be, but crossing the street, even at the light, in Yesler Terrace can be dangerous. Last month, one of the Seattle Housing Authority's maintenance employees was crossing the street—at the cross walk—when a van hit him.

The incident occurred at 7 a.m., which is just about the time children catch school busses in the morning. Our staff person was lucky that no bones were broken, but he is in a lot of pain.

It seems that everyone is in hurry to get where they are going, and not enough people are paying attention.

If a driver did not see a full grown man, you can well imagine that such a driver would not see a child either.

It is important that we all watch for the cars, because the drivers aren't always pay-

ing attention to us. Even if we are in the right, we could be seriously hurt.

It is important to teach children to watch out for cars, too. If a car is coming toward the cross walk fast, it is better to wait than to be run down.

On another topic, if one of your faucets is leaking, please phone in a maintenance work order.

Every drip of water is a precious resource, and every leak can cause damage. The maintenance work order number for Yesler Terrace is the same as the management office number (206) 223-3758.

Last month, longtime former staff person and former Yesler Terrace resident, Mele Fe'iloakitau passed away in American Samoa.

She had gone there to care for her elderly father. Even though she was far away, we always looked forward to seeing her again. She will be sorely missed.

Council seeks new leadership

Are you interested in the future of Yesler Terrace? Do you want to know how decisions are made in the neighborhood?

The election of new officers for the Yesler Terrace Community Council will take place in April. Any resident who has attended a council meeting in the past six months and is over the age of 16 is eligible to run. If you think you might be interested, you can learn more by attending the Council meeting on March 21 at 6 p.m. at the Jesse Epstein Building, 905 Spruce St.

If you have questions or would like to be considered for Council office, contact Community Builder Ellen Ziontz at (206) 343-7484.

