



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



The Voice

August
2006
Articles translated
into six languages

The newspaper of Neighborhood House

Flexcar's job program helps public housing residents

By GABRIEL SCHEER
Special to The Voice

Seattle-based Flexcar is a car-sharing company that has long been of value to residents throughout King County. However, Flexcar's Job Access program, launched in February 2005, has been an even greater boon to residents of public housing communities.

Members of Flexcar normally pay a \$35 application fee and \$40 annual membership fee, after which they can use any of Flexcar's vehicles whenever they like. Vehicles are parked conveniently all across the county. Members pay by the hour for use of more than 160 vehicles, and the rates (which start at \$9 per hour) cover gas, insurance, maintenance — basically all the costs of car ownership.

It's a good deal, but the Job Access program provides public housing residents with one step better — a free application, a free year of membership and hourly usage rates as low as \$2 per hour.

"Being an SHA resident on a fixed income, I found it almost impossible to afford to drive my own vehicle. When I...figured the costs of gas, insurance, AAA, and car tabs — forget it," said Al Mayo, a resident of Phinney Terrace. "For me, choosing to drive a Flexcar and leave my own car parked was a no-brainer."

Bradley Eddy, a resident of Center West, agrees, noting that Flexcar gives him "freedom, from owning a car," and provides him with a convenient way to run errands and carry groceries without having to ride the bus.

To be eligible for the Job Access program, an individual must be unemployed or a resident of subsidized housing and have all the other requirements of Flexcar membership: a valid driver's license with a good driving record and a debit or credit card. Applicants must be between the ages of 21 and 75 years old.

This unique program is a partnership between Flexcar and King County Metro with funding support from the Washington Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Authority.

It gives public housing residents the benefits of Flexcar's entire fleet, at a fraction of the cost normally associated with this already-cheap service. Capitol Park resident Mary Alice Knotts is thankful for the service.

"I used the car to take a training class—very economical," she said.

Most public housing residents qualify for the Job Access program. To learn more and to sign up, go to <http://www.flexcar.com/jobaccess>.

Gabriel Scheer works as the Job Access program manager at Flexcar.

Refugee demonstrates love of faith, community through music

By KELSEY JONES-CASEY
Special to The Voice

Facing discrimination and without the possibility of higher education or a government job in Iran, Paria Zeydishe and her brother Ali decided to leave their home country to come to the United States. After spending a year in Turkey waiting for refugee status, they arrived in Seattle on Jan. 26.

Paria and Ali are of the Baha'i faith. Baha'i are a persecuted minority in Iran, the country where the religion was born.

Since Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979, Baha'is have lost the privileges of going to university or holding government jobs. Many homes of Baha'i have been looted, and hundreds of Baha'i have been imprisoned for their participation in religious study.

Zeydishe describes the Baha'i faith as an inclusive and loving religion.

"We believe in God; we believe in all other religions too. We love everyone," she said. "The most important thing is love in our faith. You have to love everyone. You are not supposed to ask them what they believe. You love them."

Zeydishe's mother converted to Baha'i from Islam the year Paria was born. Her father is still Muslim, but the children were raised Baha'i.

After their brief sojourn in Turkey, Ali and Paria made the long journey to America alone. Zeydishe is only 24 years old, and between her and her brother, they only knew one person in Seattle.

They did not carry much on the long journey, but Zeydishe did bring something of great importance: her tar, a traditional long-necked lute from Iran.

Zeydishe began playing the tar as an adolescent in Tehran, the capital of Iran. She comes from a musical family: her father sings, her sister plays piano and Ali accompanies her on the tombak, a traditional Iranian drum.

Zeydishe said she immediately became enamored with the instrument after seeing a tar master's concert in the home of a friend.

"I was sitting close to her, and I could see how she was playing," she said. "I loved the sound."

She started private lessons four days later.

The tar is an important instrument for all Iranians. It is thousands of years old, and its music evokes a different age in Iranian culture. Its minor melodies are capable of dramatic changes in volume and tenor.

Zeydishe shared the magical sound of the tar with Seattle's public in late June at Refugee ARTvocacy, an event featuring refugee artists and crafts people in honor of World Refugee Day.

The crowd was enthusiastic about the performance.

"It is amazing. I feel as though I am in Iran, only for a few minutes," one listener said. "I'd never heard Iranian music before tonight."

Zeydishe says that this same music has helped her transi-



PHOTO BY JAMES PIRLIE

Paria Zeydishe plays the tar, a traditional Iranian instrument, for a crowd at a World Refugee Day event in June.

tion to a new life in the United States.

"When I came here I listened to traditional Iranian music. Sometimes it is hard to believe that you have left your country and are living in a new country," she said. "You don't know anybody and you have a new life. Listening to traditional music made me more comfortable so that I could start to believe that I was here. It helps me adjust."

While Zeydishe practiced every day while living in Iran and in Turkey, her practicing here has been limited by Seattle's humid climate. Sadly, the moisture in the atmosphere causes the lambskin covering of the tar to sag.

However, the dry weather in June graced Zeydishe with beautiful conditions to play at Refugee ARTvocacy.

Although Zeydishe and her brother Ali both revere Iranian music and culture, they are now looking forward to embracing an American way of life. Zeydishe chose to move to Seattle because she had heard that it was a good place to study art. She was a tar instructor for kindergartners in Iran, and she hopes one day to teach music in the United States.

Paria and Ali giggle about their first few months in America, about the mistakes they made while learning English, and about their first jobs. They are all laughs when they reflect on their bumbling attempts at communication.

Both said they are unsure if they will ever return to

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"It's an incredible opportunity for people who are sometimes overlooked."
— Wendy Price, South Seattle Community College's program manager for workforce education, on a new tuition assistance program for food stamp recipients

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Health Notes

A column devoted to your well-being

Healthy communication makes a difference

By KRISTEN CALLISON, MS
Special to *The Voice*

Have you ever felt frustrated when talking with a friend or family member about an important matter, and they don't seem to be listening?

Have you felt misunderstood when someone criticizes you?

Can you remember a time when something you thought would be a simple conversation turned into a big fight instead?

Some basic but important communication skills can help things go more smoothly.

What is communication?

"Communication" often means talking with other people, but it also refers to interactions like hand gestures or making "faces" (rolling eyes, frowning, smiling).

Some types of communication help people relate to one another in positive and healthy ways, while other types can make people feel angry, upset and hurt. Healthy communication is not always easy, but it can help you feel more satisfied and happy in your life.

Talking Skills

The way we talk to one another can make a huge difference in how we feel. Just think of the last time someone complimented you on your cooking, your hospitality or your child's behavior. These simple comments can really brighten the day, and they make us feel good about ourselves.

Now think of the last time someone called you a rude name, yelled at you or refused to speak with you. These short moments can leave us feeling down, lonely and worthless for a long time.

We can easily have a positive impact on other people by telling them what we appreciate about them and by saying thank-you when they help us.

It is also important to find better communication tools to use when we are upset or angry.

For instance, take a break and come back to the conversation when you are calm. Talk about the problem, not the person. People can come together to solve problems, but when we attack people, we end up on different sides.

Use words like "I feel upset when..." or "It's frustrating for me when..." to explain why you are unhappy.

Set a time limit for the conversation.

Most people find it difficult to talk for hours about a problem. If something has been a problem for a long time, you might need to plan several short conversations to work it out.

Listening Skills

Another important aspect of communication is listening. The ways we listen can make a difference in how we support one another or resolve conflicts.

Can you remember a time when you felt really good, just because a friend listened to your story? Can you think of a time when someone didn't listen so well, and you felt disappointed?

These experiences can either help us build support in life or leave us feeling isolated and unable to trust other people.

When others are talking to you, the most important thing you can do is listen. You don't have to solve their problems; often just being present to hear what they have to say can be help enough.

You can also kindly set limits by telling the other person how much time you have available. In this way, you can be supportive and also take care of your own responsibilities.

If it seems like the person needs more help than you can give, you can suggest that they talk with a counselor or doctor to find the right assistance.

When you need someone to talk to, it can be helpful to let friends or family know that they can help by just listening.

If you know from past experience that a particular person might tell your troubles to someone else without your permission, it is probably best to find a more trustworthy person to confide in.

Resources

There are many places where people can receive support in communication.

One excellent resource for all of King County is the Crisis Line, 206-461-3222. By calling this number, you can receive referrals for all sorts of help including crisis counseling, food, shelter, clothing and other services.

Kristen Callison is a mental health counselor with Puget Sound Neighborhood Health Centers, a nonprofit organization providing medical and dental services at several locations for people in Seattle and King County.

You can visit PSNHC on the Internet at <http://www.psnhc.org>.

community here and continue to make lives for themselves.

And of course, Zeydishe's tar music still brings her peace and security.

When she experiences music, whether playing or listening, she says that it makes her "feel as though she loves all people and wants to share that feeling with everyone."

She quotes a traditional Iranian saying, "When there is a little love in your heart and you hear good music, it grows."

'My life and future are bright'

One immigrant's road to U.S. citizenship



PHOTO BY MIKE MOORE

Jeilani Salim Abdalla proudly shows off his work identification card as Neighborhood House Family Support Worker Gurey Farah looks on.

By PAM MCGAFFIN
Special to *The Voice*

Jeilani Salim Abdalla's journey from Somali refugee to American citizen began 14 years ago, shortly after militiamen invaded his home, shot and killed his son, and kidnapped his daughter.

Two days after finding his 20-year-old son dead and daughter gone, the former businessman fled with the rest of his family to Kenya, surviving a perilous 15-day ocean voyage on a small, overcrowded boat.

After living several years in a Kenyan refugee camp, he and his family secured a U.S. sponsor and arrived in this country in 1997. With help from Neighborhood House in Seattle, Abdalla started English classes and the process towards citizenship.

But his journey, after overcoming so many hardships, was looking more and more like a dead-end. Almost a year and a half after he applied, he was still waiting for an interview with immigration authorities.

Inquiring about the delay, he was told his file had been transferred to a "special research facility" in Washington D.C., for a likely "name check."

Abdalla and those who advocated on his behalf believe that, in the post 9/11 climate of heightened national security, his application was held up because of his Islamic-sounding name.

"I am a legal permanent resident. ... I work, pay my taxes, and obey the laws in my new country," he said in an October 2005 appeal letter to U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell. "I feel my application was given special attention due to my name

and my ethnicity. I believe this is unjust and unfair."

Mary Turla, the English as a Second Language teacher at Neighborhood House who helped him contact Cantwell, says Abdalla would come to class toting his answering machine in a plastic bag when he had a message from the senator's office.

"Maria," he would say, addressing his teacher, "there's a message from Maria."

Abdalla believes that his application for citizenship would never have been processed without help from Neighborhood House and Cantwell's intervention.

He rattles off the date he became a citizen with automatic ease, as if it's his birth date: March 15, 2006.

He celebrated by bringing a cake to Neighborhood House's Park Lake site in White Center and sharing it with other ESL students, Neighborhood House staff, friends and family.

His reasons for coming to the United States are common to many who fled the violence in his homeland: peace, justice and a chance at a better life. His children, including the daughter who had been kidnapped and later returned, are all attending school here and doing well.

Meanwhile, Abdalla is thrilled to finally be able to vote and make plans for the future. He's saving money with the goal of starting a grocery and goods store catering to East African refugees living in this country.

"I forgot all the pain during waiting," he said through a translator. "Now that I've passed this obstacle, my life and future are bright."

Pam McGaffin works for Moore Ink., a consultant for Neighborhood House.

Music

Continued from front page

Iran.

"If Iran changes, I will return," Zeydishe says. "But otherwise, no, because of the government. If the government changes..." she pauses uncertainly, "The people there are very nice, but not the government."

For now, music keeps the siblings' culture alive within the walls of their Bellevue apartment. They have joined the Baha'i

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.

Home ownership fair planned

By VOICE STAFF

Do you dream of owning your own home?

This year, the New Americans Home ownership Fair will focus on getting you started, unlocking the knowledge of home ownership and addressing the specific needs of immigrant and refugee communities.

The eighth-annual event connects limited-English speaking people and first-time home buyers with the American dream of home ownership. It will take place on Aug. 12 at Mountain View Elementary School, 10811 12th Ave. S.W., from 9 a.m.

to 3 p.m.

Attendees will learn how to purchase a home and keep it healthy and find out valuable information about lenders and real estate agents. Workshops will provide information about how to save on utilities, how to fix a leaky faucet and how to build a deck.

Interpretation in Tagalog, Cambodian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, Somali, Oromo, Tigrinya, Amharic and Russian will be provided.

For more information, contact Nikki Lac at 206-623-5132, ext. 318 or by e-mail at Nikki@apialliance.org.



One to grow on

Garden tips for community gardeners

Harvest time is here

By ANZA MUENCHOW
Special to *The Voice*

Finally the bountiful summer harvest is truly here.

All the cool spring crops are gone and the heat-loving crops are taking over the gardens. Tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, squash and beans are all starting to produce for us. Yum.

To maximize food production from each plant, be sure to pick these crops regularly — don't let the fruits of your labor hang on the vines or stalks too long. For example, summer squash and beans should be picked several times a week so that the plant will continue to produce.

If you allow the fruiting parts to stay on the plants too long, that will signal to the plant that it has completed its job (seed formation) and that it doesn't need to produce any more fruits this season. So always pick off the old beans and squashes, even if they're too big to eat or were chewed on by slugs or bugs.

Chop up damaged or unwanted crops and compost them, turning them into a rich fall mulch.

Speaking of compost, it is very important during the summer to water your compost as often as you do your soil. It should be as damp as a wrung out sponge.

You may need to cover your compost pile with a plastic sheet to hold in the moisture and minimize water use.

As you harvest spring crops, space becomes available in your garden to plant fall or cool season crops.

Pay special attention to watering when starting new seeds in August drought time.

Use floating row cover (like Reemay) over your newly-seeded beds to help control moisture and protect new sprouts from cats digging in your beds or birds eating your seedlings.

Plant snap peas, spinach or bok choy this month, and you'll have some delicious harvests in October. If the peas don't produce pods by fall, you can enjoy picking the pea vines for salads or stir fry. Yum.

Last month I was invited to visit the garden club at the Seattle Housing Authority Tri Court apartments. Besides a tour of their garden, I enjoyed a delicious pizza dinner (with Walla Walla onions!) while we talked about gardens, seasonal foods and community P-Patch projects.

One of the ideas we discussed was how community gardens like the one at Tri Court can benefit from a Small and Simple Grant from the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods.

The P-Patch office can advise community members on the preparation of the grant through the Cultivating Communities Project. Up to \$15,000 can be awarded to neighborhood gardens to upgrade their gardens, repair old raised beds, buy compost, improve irrigation, prune trees and lots more.

Contact Martha Goodlett in the P-Patch office at 206-684-0540 for more information.

Enjoy these long warm days and eat well. Let me know if you have questions or topics you want included in future articles.

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

Food stamp recipients qualify for tuition help, social services

By VOICE STAFF

For those who receive basic food assistance, a new program in Washington could break down the barriers to education and a better job, by offering tuition assistance, child care and other needed services.

The Food Stamp Employment and Training Program is a voluntary federal program that aims to help food stamp recipients prepare for the working world or find a better job. It also makes vocational education a possibility for those who might otherwise not qualify for financial assistance.

Funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Department of Social and Health Services administers the program in cooperation with Goodwill Industries, the YWCA, Port Jobs, Seattle Jobs Initiative and South Seattle Community College.

One of the purposes of the program is to increase the use of Washington's Basic Food program (food stamps), which helps low-income families buy food.

Many people do not realize that you can still qualify for Basic Food if you do not have children, if you have a retirement fund, car or savings account or if you are working or on unemployment.

The FSET program now provides financial assistance for those enrolled in Basic Food, so that they can receive free vocational education, job training, English as a Second Language classes, Adult

Basic Education classes, job placement assistance and support services such as child care, case management, housing and emergency health services.

The program provides enough financial support for students enrolled at South Seattle Community College that their tuition, books, materials, parking or bus passes are free.

Students already enrolled in the program are taking such courses as aviation, welding and web design. The only requirement is that they maintain a 2.0 grade point average.

"It's an incredible opportunity for people who are sometimes overlooked," said Wendy Price, program manager for workforce education for South Seattle Community College. "They're the working poor, struggling families who usually don't qualify for other tuition assistance programs."

The one-year pilot program started in October, but DSHS officials are already working to renew the grant for another year. Thanks to the program, South Seattle Community College has enrolled about 150 students who would not have otherwise been able to afford the program, Price said.

For more information about the program, call 206-764-5835. For more information about the Basic Food program, call 1-877-644-3663.

Collaboration between housing authorities leads to good job for area resident



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

From left: Minh Huynh, logistics specialist for the King County Housing Authority, Lamont King, Seattle Housing Authority Job Counselor Larry Hill and SHA Job Counselor Van Vo. With help from both agencies, King was able to land a job as an experienced construction laborer with Walsh Construction, the general contractor for KCHA's redevelopment of Park Lake Homes. King had developed a strong reputation as a most capable, skilled, safety-minded, reliable and personable employee while working for a plumbing sub-contractor on the early stages of the Rainier Vista redevelopment. Good luck with your new job, Lamont!

Consider volunteering for American Lung Association

By VOICE STAFF

Are you concerned about the rising asthma epidemic? Do you support education and prevention as effective tools to promote healthy lungs? If so, consider volunteering with the American Lung Association of Washington.

The organization's Master Home Environmentalist program is currently seeking volunteers to help educate communities about the hazards of indoor air pollution.

Volunteers make free home visits to families throughout King County and provide low or no-cost tips on ways to reduce air pollutants, such as dust and mold, in the home.

To become a Mater Home Environmentalist volunteer, those interested attend a 35-hour, 10-week training course. The training is free, however organizers do

request that volunteers provide 35 hours of service in return for this valuable experience.

The next training session will run from 6:30 to 9 p.m. on Tuesday evenings from Sept. 5 to Nov. 7 at the American Lung Association of Washington's Seattle office, 2625 3rd Ave.

For more information about the training, please contact Casey Coulombe at 206-441-5100 or by e-mail at casey@alaw.org.

If you are unable to volunteer at this time but would like a free home environmental assessment from a volunteer, or if you would like to receive a Do-It-Yourself Home Environmental Assessment List, you may also contact Coulombe at the phone number or e-mail above.

More information is available on line at <http://www.alaw.org>.

Community notes

Back to school fair planned

Join International Community Health Services for a back to school fair on Saturday, August 12 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The event will take place at the International District/Chinatown Community Center, 719 8th Ave. South.

This is a great opportunity for parents to find out which vaccinations their children need for school, get help applying for reduced-cost health insurance and to make appointments for Well-Child check-ups

Free dental screenings for children will also be available at the event.

The first 100 children to attend will receive a free backpack, and everyone will enjoy raffles, prizes, face painting and much more.

For more information call Maxine Chan at 206-788-3672.

Sound Steps for you

Walking is one of the best forms of exercise, and with Sound Steps you can

make great friends, too.

This summer, Sound Steps offers free walking groups throughout the city. Enjoy some of Seattle's most beautiful walking locations: Seward Park, Discovery Park, Alki Beach and more.

New programs include a group for Spanish speakers at Rainier Park Clinic and a group leaving from the Green Bean Coffee shop in Greenwood — coffee discount included.

Sound Steps also offers maps of local trails, prizes and free health seminars. To register, call Mari Becker in Seattle Senior Adult Programs office at 206-684-4664. You can also register via e-mail to sound.steps@seattle.gov.

The Voice needs you

Are you interested in learning more about how The Voice is produced? If so, consider joining the Voice Resident Advisory Committee. Contact Stacy Schwandt for more information at 206-461-8430, ext. 227

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.

Summertime fun!
RAINIER VISTA PARK OPENS
 See page 5



SHA NEWS

August
2006

News and information about Seattle's neighborhoods

Sybil Bailey nominated for commissioners seat

SHA AND VOICE STAFF

Mayor Greg Nickels recently announced his nomination of Sybil Bailey as resident commissioner for the Seattle Housing Authority Board of Commissioners.

"Sybil understands the issues facing low-income residents and she brings a long and proven track record for finding solutions that build stronger communities," Nickels said. "As a member of the board, she can draw on her decades of experience to provide valuable perspectives and insights."

The seven-member board is responsible for approving SHA's annual budget and for setting policies to guide SHA's operations.

If confirmed, Bailey would replace Judith Fay, whose term expired earlier this year.

Bailey has been a resident of Denny Terrace for more than 20 years. She helped to start a resident council there, and for 10 years, served as the president of the Resident Action Council, a group of representatives from SHA high-rise resident councils.

"I am honored to be the mayor's choice and intend to do my best to aid SHA resident concerns," Bailey said.

The City Council's Housing Committee will consider the mayor's nomination at its Aug. 1 meeting. Members will decide whether to pass the matter on to the full council, which would vote on confirmation.

A group of Seattle Housing Authority residents have written letters to council members opposing Bailey's nomination and questioning her track record as a leader. They pointed to dwindling attendance during her RAC presidency and argued that residents weren't allowed to have input into meeting agendas and annual work plans.

"She changed RAC from an organization that is supposed to advocate for SHA residents to one that works in partnership with SHA management, completely opposite (of



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Sybil Bailey has been nominated for a seat on the SHA Board of Commissioners.

the) purpose of the resident council," wrote Cedarvale resident Rick Harrison in a letter to the city council.

Residents also reminded council members that Bailey had been nominated for a spot on the board in 1998, when state legislation expanded it to include an additional seat for residents. According to news reports at the time, Council member Peter Steinbrueck blocked her nomination, in part because Bailey testified against provisions of the bill at a hearing in Olympia.

This time, a panel that included a former SHA resident board member and a representative of the nonprofit housing industry unanimously recommended Bailey for the seat. She also has the support of at least one council member.

"I can't think of anyone better qualified to represent residents on the Housing Authority's board," said City Council member Richard McIver. "Sybil has worked for years to bring people together to solve problems. She has overcome obstacles to make life better for those around her."

\$20 million in federal tax credits secured

Credits will spark commercial development in HOPE VI communities

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Seattle Housing Authority has helped to secure \$20 million in tax credits from the U.S. Department of the Treasury to spur commercial investment in Seattle. The treasury department awarded a total of \$4.1 billion in New Market Tax Credits in early June.

The Housing Authority was one of 63 organizations across the country, and one of just two organizations in the state of Washington to receive the award.

The tax credits are intended to help promote access to growth in urban and rural low-income communities, encouraging retail, office and other commercial investment in those areas.

The Housing Authority began preparations for this program by creating a new nonprofit organization called Seattle Community Investments. This nonprofit, which will help oversee use of the tax credits, is made up of community residents and service providers in SHA communities.

The Housing Authority's Executive Director Tom Tierney also serves as executive

director of the new nonprofit. Development Manager Paul Fitzgerald prepared the application for the tax credits and will continue to manage the process for the new nonprofit.

The Housing Authority intends to use the New Market Tax Credits to stimulate investment in commercial development at its HOPE VI communities.

"We expect that these tax credits will help us make commercial investment in our new communities more attractive," Fitzgerald said. "The U.S. Treasury created this program in order to balance the financial benefit of the tax credits to investors with the return to the community."

Commercial development will be aimed at enhancing the walkability and services available in the HOPE VI communities.

The New Market Tax Credit program is similar to the program that awards tax credits for investment in low-income housing. With these new incentives, however, investors are rewarded with tax credits for investing in commercial enterprises in low-income or developing neighborhoods.

Othello Station, High Point recognized for excellence

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Two of Seattle Housing Authority's neighborhoods were honored with awards over the last month.

Othello Station was recognized by the Pacific Coast Builders Conference at its annual trade show with a Gold Nugget Honor of Merit Award and the prestigious Grand Award in the Best Affordable Project (under 30 units/acre) category.

The American Institute of Architects

awarded High Point with one of eight "Show You're Green Awards" at its national convention and design expo. Othello Station, developed by Seattle Housing Authority, built by Walsh Construction and designed by architect WRT Solomon E.T.C., was one of more than 600 entries to the Gold Nugget Awards competition.

The competition honors creative achievements in architectural design and land-use

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Housing assistance extended for evacuees

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Nearly 50 households that evacuated New Orleans for Seattle recently received notice from the Federal Emergency Management Agency that they are no longer eligible for housing assistance.

In order to help these households complete the difficult transition they face, the Seattle Housing Authority has offered to extend the aid currently being provided by the state's Community Trade and Economic Development Department.

The department provided assistance to households deemed ineligible by FEMA

through the end of June. By using temporary voucher funding, SHA has extended this assistance for two more months, through the end of August. This means that evacuees will have had a full year of rental assistance since being displaced from their homes.

Many of the households contacted by SHA in a March survey indicated their intention of staying in Seattle, although most had not yet secured jobs. Households that will continue to need assistance have been encouraged to apply for public housing and Section 8 assistance.

"We will probably end up serving about

half of the households that were deemed ineligible," said Dennis Hall, SHA's admissions manager. "We are finding that a lot of these people have moved on with their lives and have not responded to our offer of continued assistance."

Over the past several months, FEMA has transitioned many of the 160 Seattle families to a different assistance program. About 30 of these households still live in SHA housing, and others are placed with private landlords. A national company hired by FEMA has largely taken over the administration of leases and payments.

SHA to build housing on Qwest Field parking lot

Workforce housing will be a part of a mixed-use development



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Pioneer Square Community Association Executive Director Craig Montgomery, County Council member Larry Gossett, County Council member Dow Constantine, Mayor Greg Nickels and King County Executive Ron Sims talk about the project at a recent press conference.

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Seattle Housing Authority will contribute its expertise in low-income housing and its financing capability to a mixed-use project led by developers Nitze-Stagen and Opus Northwest.

King County named the project the winning proposal last month for the development of a four-acre site located south of Pioneer Square and north of Qwest Field. The site, which is owned by the county, is currently used for surface parking.

Aspects of the project, including the land sale and needed zoning changes, will have to be approved by the city and county councils before the project can go forward.

If completed, the project would contain 956 condominiums and apartments. The Housing Authority would own and manage 140 apartments that would be leased to workers who make at or less than 60 percent of area median income, or about \$33,000 a year for a single person.

"We are excited to be part of this project," said SHA Executive Director Tom Tierney. "It is an opportunity to add to our stock of workforce housing."

The Housing Authority expects to contribute tax-credit equity and bond financing

to the 140 apartments it would own and manage, which would include one- and two-bedroom units with rents ranging from \$875 to \$1,020 per month.

In all, the project would include 394 condominiums and row houses, 562 apartments, 1,035 parking spaces and resident-oriented retail and commercial development in 25,000 square feet of street-level space.

At the July 5 ceremonies at the site both King County Executive Ron Sims and Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels praised the development team and the concept.

"This has been a vast wasteland of parking," Sims said. "But it will be transformed into an extraordinary neighborhood."

The proposed development has received enthusiastic support from Pioneer Square residents, but several organizations that have used the lot for overflow parking and exhibit space during trade shows are opposing the project.

Sims, however, expressed confidence that the project would go forward in spite of any opposition.

The new development would double the number of residential units in Pioneer Square.

quality lumber, to a natural drainage system that mimics the drainage qualities of an open meadow.

"This award program aims to showcase the wide range of ways that architects have included green elements in aesthetically excellent, affordable designs," said Gita Dev, "Show You're Green" Awards jury chair. "Such principles can be easily incorporated by developers to green their housing projects and will have a lasting, positive impact on the surrounding community."

High Point is SHA's largest redevelopment site. By the end of the decade, it will have 1,600 new affordable and market-rate units across 130 acres. All of the homes at High Point meet local Built Green three-star standards, and 150 trees on the original site have been preserved in the redevelopment.

High Point's natural drainage system cleans, cools and filters stormwater runoff to Longfellow Creek, which has the highest number of Coho salmon in all of Seattle's creeks. Four miles of grassy and vegetated swales enhance the watershed, also preserving the area's water and ecosystem quality.

Awards

Continued from front page

planning for residential, commercial and industrial projects. The awards ceremony is the premier event of this highly-regarded trade show, which brings together residential builders and architects from the Pacific Coast states and neighboring countries.

Othello Station is the final phase of the NewHolly redevelopment. It features 219 units of new rental housing, with 163 public housing units and 56 additional rental units serving those who earn between 30 and 60 percent of Seattle's median income.

It also includes homes for sale built by private home builders Polygon Northwest and Bennett-Sherman Homes and a mixed-use building featuring rental housing, a retail store, offices and the Holly Park Medical Clinic.

Othello Station also includes five acres of parks, capped by the 2.3 acre Central Park.

High Point, designed by architect Mithun, was recognized with the American Institute of Architects' "Show You're Green" Award for incorporating sustainability factors into the entire process — from recycling the previous development's high

New Section 8 waiting list of 4,000 households formed

Demand for vouchers far exceeds supply

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

After an open period of just under two weeks, Seattle Housing Authority's waiting list for its Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program closed in late May.

During that period, 5,949 households mailed in forms to try for one of 4,000 spots on the program's new waiting list, which was created in June by a random drawing.

Lisa Cipollone-Wolters, SHA's director of housing advocacy and rental assistance, said that the fact that sign-up forms exceeded available waiting list spaces by 50 percent is a testament to the need for affordable housing in the city.

"We are glad that we are able to extend vouchers to a new group of Seattle residents, but it is unfortunate that we are unable to serve all who need this assistance," she said.

The Housing Authority will begin offering vouchers to those on the new waiting list as soon as all households on the old list, which was closed in 2003, have been served.

For those who drew low numbers, the wait will be measured in months, not years.

For people who drew high numbers, the wait could be as long as three years, by which time SHA expects to start the process all over again with another lottery and another waiting list.

Section 8 vouchers help low-income people rent private housing anywhere in Seattle. The Housing Authority pays the difference between the rent a landlord charges and what a household can reasonably pay. More than 7,000 Seattle households use these vouchers.

Beginning well before the recent open period, SHA announced the lottery in newspaper ads placed to reach as many people as possible.

The forms needed to sign up for the lottery were available on the Housing Authority's Web site and at SHA high-rise buildings and administrative offices.

All branches of the Seattle Public Library stocked the forms, too, as did all the city's Neighborhood Service Centers and Community Centers. All five Department of Social and Health Services service centers within the city limits also stocked the forms.

Meet Lundquist and Rubio, two new LIPH housing counselors

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Two new housing counselors, Gayle Lundquist and Eva Rubio, recently became Seattle Housing Authority housing counselors.

They join three other housing counselors on the admissions team for the Low-Income Public Housing program at the Seattle Housing Authority's PorchLight office.

Both Lundquist and Rubio screen clients for eligibility and suitability for particular LIPH units.

They also work with people who are looking for new apartments, keeping them informed about programs available to them at SHA and through other agencies and suggesting where they might turn for help with emergency shelter and housing.

Although these are new roles for Lundquist and Rubio, the two are far from new faces around the Housing Authority.

Lundquist has been with SHA for 15 years. She started out in the maintenance office at Yesler Terrace, then moved to the High Point maintenance office. When SHA

started its records department in 1996, she helped develop the department.

She says she spent "many hours in dusty boxes sorting and organizing old SHA records." Once the dust cleared, Lundquist worked as an administrative specialist III in Housing Operations for eight years, working closely with the residents in senior and LIPH buildings.

In January, Lundquist started her present position as a housing counselor in LIPH admissions.

Rubio, who is fluent in Spanish and English, has worked with low-income housing programs for about six years, most recently with the Bellingham Housing Authority.

She came to work for SHA last September in the Section 8 department, where she was a certification specialist II and moved over to LIPH as a housing counselor in April.

If you're interested in other housing options available to you, or if you'd like to talk with either Lundquist or Rubio, both may be reached at 206-239-1536.

About The Voice

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

The Voice is developed and edited by Neighborhood House with help from SHA residents and staff. 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 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.

There are many ways to get involved in the production of The Voice; call 206-461-8430, ext 227 to find out more. 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

Meetings scheduled about homeWorks Phase 2 funding

By SVEN KOEHLER
Seattle Housing Authority

Well before construction starts in 2007, a series of meetings have been planned for the seven LIPH buildings scheduled to be renovated in the second phase of the homeWorks project.

The meetings will take place in building community rooms throughout the month of August.

The goal of the three-phase homeWorks project is to make basic improvements to 22 of the Seattle Housing Authority high-rises in order to make sure they are good places to live for low-income residents far into the future.

At the August meetings residents will have a chance to learn about the financing plan that will help pay for the needed updates to their buildings, which is very similar to the financing method already being used in the first phase of homeWorks.

All buildings in homeWorks will have their old water supply pipes replaced, and other work will be done that is tailored to fit the needs of each building.

The plans will be discussed at the August meetings and explained in detail before work starts in 2007.

So far, homeWorks has installed new copper pipes to over 340 apartments in three buildings in the project's first phase, and residents have noticed the improvement.

"The water from my kitchen sink is now clear and doesn't have a rusty taste to it anymore," said Jesse Byers of Green Lake Plaza. "Plus, the water pressure is great."

In addition, residents are seeing the benefits of remodeled community rooms, larger mailboxes, updated ventilation systems and modernized intercom systems.

Some building exteriors are also being painted and waterproofed, and similar work will be happening in second phase buildings.

While there is no doubt that these repairs are needed, paying for them has been a challenge at a time when federal dollars are scarce. The solution for Phase 2 will follow the successful model of Phase 1, using two financing methods together.

First, SHA will borrow money for the remodels by issuing bonds. The bonds will be paid back using the capital subsidy supplied each year by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Additional money for the homeWorks project will be obtained by using tax-credit financing. With this financing plan, the work in Phase 2 will be completed in about two years. Without it, using only HUD's annual capital subsidy, it would take up to 15 years to complete.

To help residents better understand the



PHOTO BY SVEN KOEHLER

Green Lake Plaza resident Jesse Byers (and his pet Templeton II) noticed an increase in water pressure in the shower after homeWorks replaced the water lines.

details of this method, meetings have been scheduled in the seven buildings due to be in Phase 2 of the project.

The tax-credit program gives tax breaks to investors who join SHA as legal partners in the ownership of the buildings. This type of financing is used by most low-income housing developers in Seattle to build and renovate low-income housing.

The investors in this type of project are called "limited partners" because their ownership rights in the property are very restricted. SHA remains the "general partner." This means that SHA controls building management, rent policies, admissions policies and all of the other factors that define SHA buildings as low-income public housing.

There is also a role for HUD in the legal agreements that are required for the tax-credit program. They guarantee that the housing will remain low-income housing for at least 40 years, after which SHA will regain full ownership.

In fact, tax-credit financing carries rules and regulations that are very similar to the present Low-Income Public Housing policies.

The use of tax-credit equity financing will have no direct effect on rents and eligibility, and residents' rents will not be raised to pay for the homeWorks construction.

As in Phase 1, no one will be denied access as a result of this change, and units in each building will be set aside for full-time student households.

Are you interested in learning more about tax-credit financing and the upcoming second phase of the homeWorks project? If so, consider attending one of the meetings at SHA's high-rise buildings.

All SHA residents are welcome to attend. Check out the schedule above for more information.

Additionally, a public comment period for residents and other interested stakeholders will extend from Aug. 1 through Sept. 15.

You may also call the homeWorks information hotline at 206-615-3534 to get answers to your questions about the project or to leave a comment about the plan.

homeWorks advisory committee offers resident input

By LYNN SEREDA
Special to The Voice

A resident-run advisory committee presented a proposal to the Seattle Housing Authority last month, asking officials to agree to certain conditions as they undertake homeWorks renovation projects.

The document requests compensation for inconveniences, the provision of extra staff so buildings under renovation are staffed at all times during business hours, adherence to Washington landlord/tenant law with regards to entry of units and the completion of a habitability checklist whenever significant work has been done in a resident's unit.

Cedarvale resident Rick Harrison took the lead on creating the document with input from the committee, Julie Wade, an attorney who is serving as the committee's counsel, and Eric Dunn, an attorney with the Northwest Justice Project.

Wade noted that the document was of such quality that "it was as if Mr. Harrison had been practicing law for five years."

A committee forms

The homeWorks advisory committee was formed this year by members of the Resident Action Council. Residents of each of the eight buildings have elected at least one resident to represent their interests at the monthly meetings. Interpreters are provided for committee members whose primary language is not English.

So far, the group has held two meetings with SHA staff members.

Advisory committee representatives have focused on the idea that SHA should make every effort, not only to keep residents informed, but to accommodate their needs during what can be very stressful renovations.

"SHA has a greater duty to accommodate special needs in occupied rehabilitation... in a community which has a particularly fragile population...and respect and dignity must be foremost in this process," Wade said.

Back in October, when residents in eight high-rise buildings first heard about the first phase of homeWorks, concerns spread through the communities: "What are tax credits and what does that mean for the future of low-income housing?" "How will doing renovation work affect the lives of residents," they asked.

While SHA has sent spokespeople to buildings and hired a homeWorks liaison to answer questions, many residents have said that they'd like an independent source of information and that they'd like to have input in the decisions SHA makes.

It was out of this background that the homeWorks advisory committee was created.

After much research and discussion, a consensus formed among the group that

using tax credits was probably the best way to finance the much-needed upgrades, since the Bush-era has resulted in declining housing operations funding.

What continued to concern residents was how the renovations would affect them, and how they could offer input into the process.

From the beginning, residents brought their concerns to SHA and also to RAC meetings. One frequently cited concern was previous bad experience with two major SHA renovation projects, one at Olive Ridge and the other at Lictonwood.

In summer 2004 at Olive Ridge, residents had to live in a building wrapped in plastic for eight months, reducing air flow. Then, a plumbing overhaul got severely behind schedule when a contractor was fired halfway through the job.

Residents had to live with kitchen walls opened up and in some cases ceilings with exposed pipes for another eight or nine months. Communication between property managers, resident managers, construction people and residents was often nonexistent.

Residents led by then-Olive-Ridge-resident Rick Harrison sought help from the King County Bar Association Housing Justice Project and secured their own pro-bono attorney, Julie Wade.

Wade is a strong advocate for low-income housing and its residents. She currently sits on the board of the Plymouth Housing Group and once was an attorney at SHA, giving her a strong knowledge of HUD operations.

Through her legal representation, an article in the Seattle Times and even some television coverage, residents of Olive Ridge convinced SHA to offer them a month's rent abatement. Housing Authority officials agreed that the project did inconvenience residents to a degree that should not have occurred.

Today, Resident Action Council president Doug Morrison has noted that he is "hoping that some very important agreements will be made soon, so that homeWorks can continue to progress smoothly without too many conflicts."

"It does take teamwork from both parties," he added, "which means I would like to see attendance from the resident representatives to the meetings improve."

The HAC meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 10 a.m. at SHA's main headquarters. To find out who your building representatives are, contact Lynn Sereda at 206-675-3067 or by e-mail at lindelspin@yahoo.com. You can also contact your community builders, Marcia Johnson or Brett Houghton at 206-239-1530 or 206-239-1625.

Lynn Sereda is a resident of Capitol Park and a member of the homeWorks advisory committee.

Tax credit information meetings

Olympic West: Wed., Aug. 2, at 3 p.m.

University West: Fri., Aug. 4 at 2 p.m.

Queen Anne Heights: Tues., Aug. 8 at 3 p.m.

Cal-Mor Circle: Mon., Aug. 14 at 3 p.m.

Cedarvale House: Tues., Aug. 15 at 4 p.m.

Lake City House: Tues., Aug. 22 at 3 p.m.

Center Park: Thurs., Aug. 24 at 6 p.m.

in the Community Center

Coming next month

Pike Place Market's fishthrowers rely on residents of Primeau Place

An Olive Ridge resident celebrates 106 years!

A new recreation program begins at Ravenna School Apartments

HIGH POINT HERALD

NEWS ABOUT THE HIGH POINT COMMUNITY

High Point says goodbye to community builder

By CLAIRE McDANIEL
Seattle Housing Authority

The High Point neighborhood bid a sad farewell to their community builder and friend, Kari-lynn Frank, who left last month after almost four years of hard work and dedication.

Frank was "the catalyst for many new and innovative initiatives in the High Point and larger West Seattle community," said John Forsyth, Seattle Housing Authority community services administrator. "Her passion for community building and her ability to bring partners and stakeholders together to achieve common goals will be sorely missed."

Frank said leaving the Housing Authority was a tough decision for her to make for many reasons.

In a heartfelt e-mail to the High Point and SHA community, she wrote, "I have learned so much from the providers and community members that has positively impacted me. I know that I leave with far more than I leave behind. Your talents, grace, kindness, commitment and caring are models to all who work in this sector. I will miss you."

Susan Winn of Resident Choices describes Frank as a "dynamic" person who went "above and beyond her job as community builder for service providers and residents."

For example, she went out of her way to be sure holiday parties for residents were successes, and she organized block parties and other events that gave the High Point residents opportunities to interact and have fun.

"She really cared," said Sandra Trent, a High Point resident since 1968.

Whether it was executive committee



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Kari-lynn Frank served as the High Point community builder for nearly four years.

elections, diversity festivals or just stopping to chat while shopping at the local grocery store, Trent said she will miss Frank's involvement in the High Point community.

Trent's daughter Joyce Williams also lives in High Point with her family. She remembers Frank as being "tireless" in her efforts to help residents in a variety of ways. Frank participated in community council meetings, making sure to bring back answers to questions concerning SHA, community events, and HUD issues, Williams said.

She added that she is sorry to see Frank go and that hers will be "big shoes to fill."

Frank said she is proud to have been a part of the development of a vision for High Point, and she hopes she can still contribute to the community in some capacity. She has decided to return to her former job as public affairs and organizational consultant.

The Housing Authority will hire a replacement for the Frank this month.

Residents' traffic concerns addressed

By ROSE LONG
Special to The Voice

Multiple cars, population density and parking on both sides of narrow residential streets make a good recipe for questionable pedestrian safety in High Point, but thanks to residents' call for action, improvements are already in place in some of the neighborhood's hot spots.

Work toward a solution began when parents waiting for their children to be dropped off by the school bus described their uneasiness about traffic and congestion to Neighborhood House health workers.

Many were specifically concerned about traffic on Southwest Raymond Street off of 35th Avenue Southwest where the library is located.

Drivers who have difficulty making a turn to the arterial become frustrated because of the high speed and heavy traffic on 35th Avenue. Both elderly and young pedestrians have expressed concern over crossing the street there because the light changes too quickly.

These were just some of the comments that residents brought up at a community

meeting on pedestrian safety hosted by the Healthy Homes Project-Community Action Team in January.

Neighborhood House brought the residents' concerns to the attention of the Seattle Department of Transportation and requested that parking be restricted on a half block of Southwest Raymond Street, where there is generally a bottleneck during rush hour and other heavy traffic times.

Residents also asked SDOT to lengthen the "walk" light so that slower-paced elderly, young children and disabled pedestrians can feel safer crossing the street.

During the latter part of June, the requests were completed. The "walk" light was increased from 10 to 14 seconds. Parking is now restricted for 80 feet on the southeast side of Raymond Street.

The Department of Transportation also put a permanent 60-foot yellow center line to clearly delineate the two lanes.

This is a great example of members of the community speaking up and getting results.

Rose Long works as a Community Action Team Coordinator for Neighborhood House.

High Point management, social services have moved

By CLAIRE McDANIEL
Seattle Housing Authority

The process of moving has been "an adventure," and they are still working out the "bugs and the kinks," especially with the telephone system, but Laura Lakings-Becvar of The Job Connection feels there is a huge advantage to having all the High Point service providers in one location.

"It will be a real benefit to the people we serve," she said. "They no longer have to go from building to building to get the services they need."

The new service center is at 6558 35th Ave. S.W. on the corner of Southwest Holly Street and 35th Avenue Southwest.

The Job Connection has also been able to add another computer so now there are five computers available to people for résumé creation, typing tests and Microsoft products tutorials.

The move was necessary because the buildings that the service providers previously occupied are now being torn down as part of the second phase of the High Point redevelopment.

"All the residents have left and now the service providers and management office

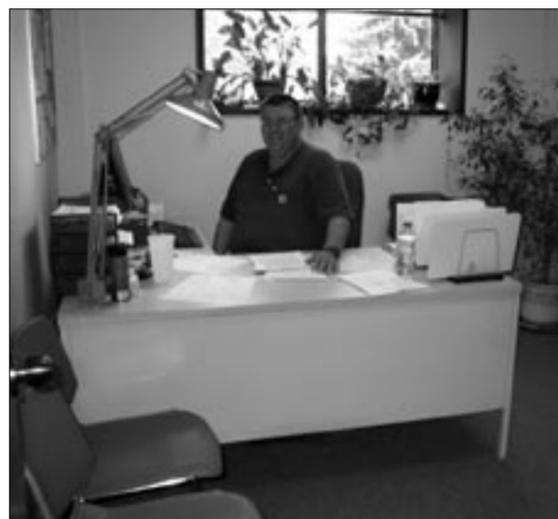


PHOTO BY CLAIRE McDANIEL

John Cheatham of Impact Property Management enjoys his new office in the High Point community.

need to leave, too" said Seattle Housing Authority's Senior Development Program Manager Tom Phillips. "We got really lucky because SHA was able to buy the new building...and, after five months of getting permits and upgrading to accommodate special needs, we were able to move in."

Sharon Jewell, redevelopment community liaison, took care of such details as scheduling the moving company and making sure that everyone had enough boxes and packing tape. She also checked back with the service providers, maintenance

and management offices to be sure that everything was running as smoothly as possible and "ran interference" when necessary.

Soon there should be a sign identifying the building as High Point Services and a directory to make it easy to locate the providers.

After High Point's second phase is finished, all service providers, except for management and maintenance, will move into a new neighborhood center owned and operated by Neighborhood House.

High Point service providers phone list for services located at 6558 35th St. S.W.

High Point maintenance.....	206-932-6126
High Point management office.....	206-932-2736
International District Housing Alliance	
Saray Thach, case manager.....	206-331-2741
Cambodian language specialty	
Tien Duong-Le, case manager.....	206-331-2465
Vietnamese language specialty	
The Job Connection at High Point.....	206-937-3292
Neighborhood House	
Aregawi Abiraha, family support worker....	206-571-4712
Amharic & Tigrigna language specialty	
Hinda Abdi, family support worker.....	206-778-6055
Somali language specialty	
Long Luu, family support worker.....	206-571-5080
Vietnamese language specialty	
Pheakkdei Neak, family support worker....	206-571-4867
Cambodian language specialty	
Neighborhood House Healthy Homes project...	206-923-3266
Resident Choices.....	206-923-1843
SafeFutures Youth Center.....	206-938-9606
Youth Tutoring Center.....	206-932-4165

Enjoy the Healthy Living Fair

By VOICE STAFF

Join your neighbors at the Healthy Homes and Healthy Living fair on Saturday, August 5.

The event will be a chance to learn more about the design and special features of High Point. You'll also be able to enjoy the outdoors, watch a healthy snack demonstration and meet new neighbors.

The fair will begin at noon at the High Point branch of the Seattle Public Library, with a walking tour of the neighborhood led by Neighborhood House Community Action Team members.

Tickets will be distributed for Healthy

Homes fanny packs as walkers arrive, and the fanny packs (full of goodies) will be awarded after the walk.

The walking tour will end at 1 p.m. at the park by the pond, but that's when the afternoon's festivities will really begin.

Those gathered will get a sneak peek at a walking map of High Point, which will provide suggestions for walking in the neighborhood, including details about the distances between landmarks and information on the ecology of the neighborhood.

For more information, call Rose Long at 206-923-3266 or Mary Castillo at 206-938-9606, ext. 116.

RAINIER VISTA NEWS

NEWS ABOUT THE RAINIER VISTA COMMUNITY

Community celebrates park grand opening



PHOTO BY MIKE MOORE

Revellers enjoy a hot day, picnic and play during the dedication of the new Rainier Vista Park.

By KARI SHERRODD
Seattle Housing Authority

Laughter from kids playing in the new Rainier Vista Park was a welcome sound at the park's dedication and picnic last month. More than 175 Seattle Housing Authority residents, supporters and volunteers who helped build the park came to the event.

"What a pleasure it is to see this park full of life," said Tom Tierney, Seattle Housing Authority executive director. "This park will be a treasure over time to help sustain and nurture the community that is being built at Rainier Vista."

Financing to complete the park was not available in the Rainier Vista redevelopment budget, so more than 150 volunteers and businesses from the community contributed their time and expertise to make the park a usable open space for residents to enjoy.

"Nothing of this scale ever happens through the efforts of one individual or organization," said Mark Okazaki, Neighborhood House executive director. "It really is about a group, like the Rainier Vista community and the (park) sponsors."

Volunteers from CityYear, Young Heroes, Neighborhood House, SvR Design and Seattle Housing Authority helped build the park. On various weekends throughout May and June the volunteers spread more than 70 cubic yards of topsoil and 10 cubic yards of bark and planted more than 300 plants and trees.

"Volunteering at the park was more fun than staying at home or watching TV," said Lastosha Evans, a young Rainier Vista resident who is involved in the Young Heroes program. "Volunteering helps us learn

more, get out of the house, help people and stay out of trouble."

Her sister Latisha, agreed.

"Helping build the park was a lot of fun," she said. Latisha also had the honor of naming the park, as she suggested Rainier Vista Park, the winning name, when the community was asked to submit ideas.

CityYear Corps members, Javier Casio, Jessica Silye and Rianna Berkowitz said they were impressed with how well the park now looks. The last time they saw it they were still planting trees and laying sod.

"It's great to see all of the kids using the park," said Silye. "I want to come and play in the park too."

Materials for the park and the volunteer work parties were generously donated by Fusionpartners, Impact Property Services, Plantscapes, Lowes Hardware, Tullys, Krispy Kreme, QFC, P-Patch Foundation, Stewart Lumber, Starbucks and Seattle Parks and Recreation.

Safeco and Starbucks awarded \$27,500 to purchase playground equipment and materials for the park.

The park development was managed by Sibyl Glasby from the Seattle Housing Authority and Brenna Casey, an AmeriCorps volunteer with Neighborhood House.

"Their hard work and dedication helped make the completion of Rainier Vista Park a reality," Okazaki said.

The park is a central meeting place for the neighbors, their families and the extended community. Kids of all ages have been using it since a part of it was opened in early June.

"Seeing the kids enjoy the park is the greatest joy," said Rainier Vista resident Akbar Meah.

Community notes

Correction

Due to reporting errors, some names were listed incorrectly in the story "Students graduate from technology class," which ran in the July issue of The Voice.

One of the speakers at the event, and the current president of the Ethiopian Community Mutual Association is Alemishet Wolde, not Kalkidan Shimelese. Also the associate of Ethio Techno Mobile Multimedia Project Di-

rector Assaye Abunie who was quoted in the article is Solomon Woldeyes, not Solome Wubishet.

Our apologies for the mistakes.

The Voice strives to provide accurate information and all mistakes brought to our attention will be corrected at the first possible opportunity.

If you'd like to correct a factual error, please contact Editor Stacy Schwandt at 206-461-8430, ext. 227 or by e-mail at stacys@nhwa.org.

Rainier Vista residents to help create art for park

By KARI SHERRODD
Seattle Housing Authority

Thanks to a \$3,200 grant award from The Black Rock Arts Foundation, the community will soon have an interactive public art piece in Rainier Vista Park.

Exactly what the art piece will be is still in question, but the community will have a leading role in deciding.

"The Black Rock Arts Foundation's mandate is to work with artists and their communities to create and display works of art that inspire civic participation and bring about social change," said Leslie Pritchett, the foundation's executive director. "We are very pleased to have the opportunity to help place works that engage people with their public spaces in new ways, that engender conversation and that encourage people to reconsider the role that public art can play in building community."

A survey to help determine what would engage the Rainier Vista community was distributed to residents last month.

Survey results showed that residents would like art work that incorporated some type of fountain or other water feature, a night-time illuminated sculpture or a mural. The survey showed that residents would also like art work that uses recycled materials or artifacts and for the community to be involved in its creation.

Artists, residents and Seattle Housing Authority employees discussed the survey results and will incorporate them into making a final decision for the project.

One idea that was discussed by the group was to create a passive water art piece that would integrate rainwater in the design. Other projects like this have used rainwater run-off to irrigate a nearby garden. This could be more cost-effective and interactive than a fountain or other type of mechanical water feature.

Another idea that sparked interest among



PHOTO BY MIKE MOORE

Community members work with The Black Rock Arts Foundation to make mosaic stepping stones at the Rainier Vista Park dedication.

the group was incorporating personal artifacts from community members, such as a favorite plush toy, a movie ticket stub or a newspaper article. All of these items would then be placed in the art piece and become what is known as "living history" in the art.

Seattle Housing Authority has placed an emphasis on incorporating art work into its redeveloped neighborhoods.

Art work creates bridges between people who view it, those who create it and people in the surrounding communities. It also creates bridges between cultures, generations and income levels.

"Artwork that is created by people in the neighborhood creates ownership not only of the art work, but of the community itself," said Sibyl Glasby, SHA developer/project manager.

For more information about the project, contact Kay Morrison at kay@staticfactory.org or kay@ignitionnw.org.

Accident closes community room



PHOTO BY JON WHALEN

A new driver crashed through the glass window and drove into the Neighborhood House Rainier Vista Center community room last month. No one was hurt, but the meeting room will be closed until repairs are finished, said NH Facilities Manager Steve Barham, shown here assessing the scene just after the accident.

NEWHOLLY NOTES

NEWS ABOUT THE NEWHOLLY COMMUNITY

Vietnamese youth connect to culture, academic success

Classes move to NewHolly in response to demand

By STACY SCHWANDT
Voice editor

As the sun blazed outside, students in the Vietnamese Friendship Association's summer program were thinking about staying cool at their upcoming car wash.

In a nearby classroom, younger children imagined sitting on the moon under a shady tree, just like the hero of the folk tale their teacher had just read to them.

Their classes are part of the Vietnamese Friendship Association's summer program, which aims to help Vietnamese youth build leadership and academic skills in an atmosphere that promotes their cultural heritage.

"The more connected they are to their community and to their culture and language, the more they will succeed in life and education," said Thanh Pham, one of the summer program teachers. "I see that happening every day."

The VFA also sponsors a Vietnamese language and culture class at Aki Kurose Middle School on Saturdays year round, which is attended by nearly 200 students.

In addition to planning car washes for charity, those in the summer program work on their writing skills to prepare for the Washington Assessment of Student Learning, a statewide standardized test.

Perhaps surprisingly, 12-year-old Hang Tran said she doesn't mind doing the work.

"It's kind of boring, but I know why we're here," she said. "It's something to do in the summer. People usually don't do anything so they get dumber and stuff."



Teacher Chau Bui helps students illustrate a Vietnamese folk tale about the moon, which she read aloud to them at the beginning of class.

The VFA program moved into classrooms in the Campus Learners building at NewHolly this summer because of the large number of families who live in the area.

There is a small tuition requirement for the course, which meets three days a week.

"Our mission is to build a bridge between the public schools and the community," said Kim Long Nguyen, the director of the VFA.

He said he meets regularly with the parents to answer any questions they have about their children's education. The Vietnamese Friendship Association also offers the families access to computers at its office at 4714 Rainier Ave. S., Suite 108.

Fifteen-year-old Jimmy Nguyen said he is enjoying the summer program, particularly the independence the teachers gave him and his classmates to make decisions about their car wash and other projects.

But his favorite part of the class was something a little more basic.

"You get to meet a lot of different people," he said.

UPS store opens at Othello Station

By KARI SHERRODD
Seattle Housing Authority

Shipping, packaging and other business services are now available at the UPS Store in the Othello Building, 3815 S. Othello St. The store, which opened at the end of last month, is the 90th UPS Store in Western Washington.

Teferi Geberetsadik and Abiy Tsega, co-owners of the new store, are looking forward to being a part of the Othello Station business community.

"We want to serve the community," said Geberetsadik, who has lived in the area in the past and has friends and family members who currently live in the area.

The store will not only serve the NewHolly community, but the extended community as well. Once Sound Transit's LINK Light Rail becomes operational, the new store will be very convenient for many people to visit, Geberetsadik said.

The store is just two blocks away from one of the future LINK Light Rail Stations.

The UPS Store and Mail Boxes Etc, a UPS company, together include more than 5,600 independently-owned locations around the world, providing convenient business services. They are also the world's largest franchisor of retail shipping, postal and business service centers.

The Othello Building opened in fall 2005. The first floor of the Othello Building is also home to the NewHolly management office, recently relocated from the NewHolly Neighborhood Campus.

The Holly Park Medical and Dental Clinic opened on the second floor of the Othello Building at the beginning of 2005 and includes 12 exam rooms and six dental operatories.

The third and fourth floors of the building include 24 low-income rental housing units managed by the Seattle Housing Authority.

Play captures life of NewHolly immigrants

By CLAIRE MCDANIEL
Seattle Housing Authority

The audience sat on the cool grass under young trees to get out of the July sun and on benches and folding chairs in neat rows eagerly anticipating the culmination of almost a year and a half of work.

Deus X Machina, a "theater ensemble working to create performances with and about overlooked and marginalized communities in Washington State," began working with the NewHolly community in March 2005.

Their production of "The Tempest at NewHolly" on the NewHolly campus marked the finale of the ensemble members' time in the community.

During the development of the play, they interviewed residents, attended community gatherings and even hosted a lasagna party where they heard stories about immigration and families and the clear desire to make the community of NewHolly thrive.

"The Tempest at NewHolly" was inspired by those stories.

Written by Andrea Allen, based on interviews with the residents of NewHolly and the play by William Shakespeare, this innovative modern-language adaptation about refugees marooned on a strange island was "reimagined" with the island relocated to the NewHolly housing development in South Seattle.

Shakespeare's play deals with political intrigue and romance, relationships between parents and children and what it means to build a community. This new version weaves in modern stories of immigration and family.

The cast for the production was a blending of professional performers and volunteers from the NewHolly community. Out of the cast of 20, 16 were locals who showed up at auditions, the rest were fringe theater veterans, said Allen, the DXM playwright and Director of Education at Seattle Repertory Theatre.

"NewHolly really is an amazing mix of



PHOTO BY CLAIRE MCDANIEL

From left: Lisa Guerricabeitia as Miranda, Emily Chisholm as Ariel, John Taylor as Caliban with the white sock puppet as Prospero in "The Tempest at NewHolly."

people. Some are literally refugees from places like Eritrea and Ethiopia. You have Muslims, Buddhists and Christians," she said. "The young people try hard to adjust to American life. Some of the older generation hopes to eventually go back to where they came from."

The director of the play, Jack Bentz, is the founding artistic director of DXM and a Jesuit priest who includes community-building through theater as part of his concept of ministry.

The rehearsals and the play itself were performed outdoors.

"You have people wandering by and watching the actors — women from Somalia in full burkhas, teenagers in regular American clothes, every imaginable sort of person," Bentz said, pointing out that the audience isn't a bunch of strangers who happen to like plays.

"The production is a real community celebration and achievement," he said.

As the play came to a close, there was a hardy round of applause, cheers and whistles in appreciation of the effort. The NewHolly community had taken a piece of traditional theater and made it their own.

For more information about Deus X Machina, visit their Web site at <http://www.dxmtheater.org>.

Material from the Seattle Post-Intelligencer was used in this report.

Community notes

Save the date for Family Fun Fest

Family Fun Fest will take place on Saturday, September 16 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the NewHolly campus.

The event will include youth, adult and family games, barbecue, a cultural performance stage, campus and community resources and a jumpy slide!

Adult volunteers are needed for the day of the event.

Community planning meetings will take place on Aug. 9 and Aug. 17 from 6 to 7 p.m. in the campus living room. Join your neighbors to help with organizing and sign-making.

Performers are invited to register now. For more information, contact Joy Bryngelson at 206-723-1725 or by e-mail at jbryngelson@seattlehousing.org.

Summer fun for everyone

Come one, come all! Join in the fun at John C. Little Sr. Park and the NewHolly Gathering Hall.

On Aug. 4 a movie will be shown in the Gathering Hall from 4 to 6 p.m.

August 11 brings a three-on-three basketball tournament and barbecue at the park from 2 to 5 p.m. August 17 is "water day," so come and splash splash with your friends from 2:30 to 5 p.m.

Bring your helmet, elbow and knee pads and join in the roller skate fair at the park on Aug. 25 from 3 to 5 p.m.

Finally, a volleyball tournament will take place in the park on Aug. 31 from 4 to 6 p.m. Bring your knee pads!

All events are sponsored by the Seattle Parks and Recreation department.

YESLER HAPPENINGS

NEWS ABOUT THE YESLER TERRACE COMMUNITY

Public meeting scheduled on environmental clean-up



A meeting will be held on Aug. 24 to discuss the environmental clean-up of the properties shown above.

By PAUL FITZGERALD
Seattle Housing Authority

Seattle Housing Authority and the King County Brownfields Program will hold a public meeting on Aug. 24 at 6 p.m. in Schaefer Auditorium at Seattle University, 901 12th Ave., to discuss plans for cleaning the property at 109 and 111 12th Ave., between East Yesler Way and East Fir Street.

Plans to investigate conditions on 113-117 12th Ave. will also be presented.

A dry cleaning business operated on this site for more than 60 years and is suspected to be the source of contamination affecting 109 and 111 12th Ave.

The Housing Authority purchased land at 109 and 111 12th Ave. and discovered through environmental testing that the property is contaminated with petroleum products and chemicals used by dry clean-

ers. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency awarded SHA a Brownfields Grant of \$96,000 to help pay for cleaning the property.

The Housing Authority is also in the process of acquiring the property at 113-117 12th Ave. and is interested in developing a clean-up plan that encompasses the source of pollution as well as the properties impacted by it. The King County Brownfields Program will fund the assessment of this site.

Representatives of SHA, King County and the environmental consultant will be present at the public meeting to provide information and answer questions.

For more information, contact Paul Fitzgerald, SHA development program manager, at 206-615-3551 or Lucy Auster from the King County Brownfields Program at 206-296-8476.

Council discusses social services in neighborhood

By VOICE STAFF

With changes in social services at Yesler Terrace on the horizon, those present at the Yesler Terrace Community Council meeting last month discussed the services they value and the possibility of creating a directory of resources that are available outside the neighborhood.

The topics were chosen partly in response to a recent announcement by the Seattle Housing Authority that it will fund crime prevention services in Yesler Terrace only through December.

SHA Community Services Administrator John Forsyth explained that a federal Department of Housing and Urban Development grant program that once helped fund those services has been cut from the department's budget.

"We had a lot more money (in the past) because there was more money to apply for," he said. "SHA and other housing authorities across the country have asked Congress not to make further cuts and this council has been very active in working

with local and national politicians. I would encourage you to continue to speak out on those issues that you care about."

Funding challenges also recently forced Neighborhood House to scale back senior services in Yesler Terrace, but NH Family and Social Services Manager Nathan Buck told those gathered that the agency is applying for a new grant that could once again expand programs for Yesler seniors.

In groups formed according to language, Yesler Terrace residents discussed their social service priorities. Everything from youth tutoring programs to English as a Second Language classes were pinpointed.

One Somali mother suggested that her daughter would benefit from a special hour at the Yesler Terrace Community Center gym where Muslim girls could play without the presence of boys. Plans were made to contact Community Center staff.

The idea of creating a resource directory of useful services outside Yesler Terrace was also discussed.

Notes from the manager

By JUDI CARTER
Senior Property Manager

There is only one month left of summer, and I know that many of the youth and children in the community are bored.

Some of them have been out late at night getting into things that they should not.

I am still receiving complaints about fireworks, and I have been receiving complaints about youth prowling cars and running from police officers when they walk through the community late at night.

I have received complaints about children as young as 7 years of age throwing rocks at cars or being outside in the early morning hours, as late as one or two in the morning.

It is very important that you know what your children are doing, especially late at night or when you are not at home to watch them.

If they do something that is dangerous or harmful to other residents, or illegal, your lease may be terminated.

Please protect your children, your neighbors and your home. Know where your

children are and what they are doing.

It gets dark pretty late these days, and when the street lights are not working, or turn themselves off and on, it is not very easy to see where you are going late at night.

Seattle Housing Authority staff members are not in the community late at night to see which street lights are not working properly.

Broken street light fixtures and blinking or dim street lights need to be replaced.

If you notice a malfunctioning street light, get the pole number from the pole and the closest address. Call the city's street light repair number at 206-684-7056 and report it.

If you have Internet access, you could also report it online at <http://www.seattle.gov/light/streetlight/>.

Also, if you see a security light on the side of your building or a neighbors' which is either blinking or out at night, please phone the management office to report it. That phone number is 206-223-3758.

Good lighting at night makes us all safer.

Feeling safe at home

Editors note: This is the first in an occasional series of health-related articles written by nurses who work in Seattle Housing Authority communities.

By WENDY GALLIART
Special to The Voice

Immigrating to this country can be a challenge and may present many difficulties. Therefore it is very important for those who are new to U.S. and American culture to feel safe within their community and their home.

It is also important for new immigrants to know that the United States has laws to protect people from abuse within the family, also called domestic violence, and these laws apply to you even if you are not a citizen.

Domestic violence is, according to the community agency New Beginnings, a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners to gain power and control.

Domestic violence occurs in all types of families and unfortunately it can sometimes increase or begin when a family immigrates to this country.

Abuse can be physical (hitting, kicking, punching), but it can also be emotional (such as name-calling, embarrassing someone in front of others, telling lies, blaming someone for one's own bad behavior) or economic (controlling all money, forcing someone to work illegally, not letting someone get job training or learn English).

Abuse can also be sexual in nature (forcing someone to have sex or accusing someone of sleeping with others), coercive (saying someone cannot stay in this country or that their children will get taken away or that they will be deported), or isolation-based (not allowing someone to have contact with friends and family, controlling someone's schedule, reading someone's mail or listening to someone's

phone calls).

There are many things that make it difficult for a woman who is an immigrant or refugee to find help with a domestic violence situation. Sometimes it can be difficult to find someone who speaks your language and it can be hard to learn about American laws or resources.

As an immigrant, you do have rights.

These rights include the right to live without fear and violence in your home, the right to have your abuser prosecuted and the right to prompt medical attention if someone hurts you.

You also have rights to protection and custody orders, the right to keep your immigration status private when discussing domestic violence with the police and the right to an attorney before speaking with anyone who officially deals with your immigration to this country.

You also have the right to petition for your own citizenship or visa without an abusive partner knowing.

It is important to keep in mind that it may be a good idea to talk to a lawyer before talking to immigration officials.

If you cannot afford a lawyer, there are people who can help you find one at Catholic Community Services. Call 206-328-5696 for more information.

No one deserves to be abused, but making changes in your life can be very difficult. It is important for you to know that there is legal assistance and support for you if you are being mistreated within your home.

Refugee Women's Alliance is an excellent resource for immigrant women who are in abusive relationships. You can call 206-721-0243 for yourself, a friend, or a loved one.

The National Domestic Violence Hotline, 1-800-799-SAFE, also has staff members who speak many languages.

Wendy Galliart graduated from the nursing program at Seattle University this spring. She spent a quarter working with residents of Rainier Vista.

