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The Voice

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Articles translated
into six languages

The newspaper of Neighborhood House

State Supreme Court hears sign rule case

By STACY SCHWANDT
Voice editor

The Washington State Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the Seattle Housing Authority sign rule case in late May. Presentations were made by SHA General Counsel James Fearn and Northwest Justice Project attorney Eric Dunn.

Dunn was representing the Resident Action Council, a group of Low-Income Public Housing tenants who sued the Housing Authority in 2005 arguing that a rule prohibiting LIPH tenants from posting signs on their apartment doors infringed on their First Amendment rights.

When they won their case in King County Superior Court, the Housing Authority appealed. In March, the appellate court passed the case directly to the Supreme Court.

The seven Supreme Court justices asked several questions during each attorney's 20-minute presentation.

No witnesses were called nor evidence taken. Rather, the court heard arguments on legal issues and will decide based on the factual record developed in the trial

court. The court may now take months to issue its opinion.

Before the court, Fearn argued that the Housing Authority needed to enact the sign rule in order to diminish clutter, cut down on the cost of refinishing doors damaged by signs and to maintain good relationships among tenants.

"Residents complain that the door displays are racist, sexist, pornographic or otherwise offensive, and property managers have to work hard to maintain peace," he said. "We struggled for months to try to come up with a standard as to which displays would be permitted. (But) the idea of trying to regulate this speech was not a viable option."

Under the law, the Housing Authority is allowed to restrict speech in public areas like hallways and common rooms, because they are not considered traditional public forums like parks and sidewalks.

Dunn argued that the fronts of doors are not public areas but rather are leased to tenants along with their apartments. Although landlords in the private sector are permitted to restrict their tenants' speech, Dunn
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Tenants Union challenges SHA over hearing process *KCHA's hearing structure an alternative*

By ALYSSA MARTIN
Voice reporter

In order to afford rent in a market-rate apartment in Seattle, over 8,000 low-income families depend on a subsidy from the Housing Choice Voucher, or Section 8, program.

For many tenants, termination from the program is devastating.

Feyory Gbrsilassie, who was facing a termination hearing while pregnant with her third child, told the Seattle Housing Authority Board of Commissioners last month, "If you take away my voucher, I will be homeless."

The Housing Authority had sent Gbrsi-

lassie a termination notice in April on the grounds that two unauthorized people were living with her, a violation of the rules governing her Section 8 voucher and considered fraud.

But Gbrsilassie's only roommates are her children, and she knew the allegations were unfounded. She immediately requested a hearing to argue that she should be able to keep her voucher.

Had the hearing taken place, her case would have rested in the hands of an officer hired by SHA, whose record was criticized by the Tenants Union of Washington in a 20-page report released in late May.

About a week after Gbrsilassie spoke at
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Immigrants get taste for Northwest outdoors



PHOTO BY ALYSSA MARTIN

Vietnamese students all participated in the work of cooking dinner on a recent camping excursion. Divided into blue, green and orange teams, they shared the tasks of food preparation and clean-up.

By ALYSSA MARTIN
Voice reporter

Sometimes the most exciting part of a story is what didn't happen.

Last month, deep in the wilderness at Kachess campground outside Cle Elum, over a dozen Vietnamese youth and their after-school tutors gathered in the woods for a camping trip.

It was the first camping experience for many of the youth, who are either children of Vietnamese immigrants or first-generation immigrants themselves.

No one started a forest fire (it was too wet), no one shot a deer (there were no guns) and no one spoke only one language (except the humble journalist).

Instead, approximately 15 tug-of-war competitions took place, 102 marshmallows were roasted and three family-sized tents were soaked with rain by the end of the weekend.

James Lovell and Vu Le, the energetic pair who manages the after-school tutoring program for Vietnamese youth ages 11 through 19 at the NewHolly Learning Center, embody outdoor leadership.

After assisting some gusty junior-high students on a perilous river crossing journey, they returned to the campsite to battle the notorious presence of I-Pods and

squirt guns.

On Saturday afternoon, Le leaped through the air in a gallant attempt to keep an inflatable beach ball from hitting a student. Lovell tended the fire and reassured the park ranger that these students would "leave no trace." The bears knew better than to the mess with these guys.

The camping trip was the last event for the after-school tutoring program, called Educational Assistance for Student Empowerment, and many of the volunteer tutors joined the students for the excursion.

The program is run by the Vietnamese Friendship Association, which has an office located at 4714 Rainier Ave S., right in the heart of the Vietnamese immigrant community.

Kevin, a 12-year-old son of Vietnamese refugees, went camping with his classmates at Howard Junior High last year. Still, he said he really liked camping with his Vietnamese friends.

"Yeah, I see them all the time after school...but it's more fun out here because there is no homework," he said.

In the midst of all the games played over the weekend, one in particular revealed the closeness of the friendships between the students. With his or her eyes closed, one student would feel the hands of another stu-

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"It's my responsibility as a pet owner to give my dog the best care, as if he were a member of my family."

— Bell Tower resident Raymond Vincent on why he bought a license for his new dog.

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Nonprofit org.
U.S. postage PAID
Seattle, WA
Permit #8887

Prescription drug plan provides discounts

By JOHN DENOYER
Special to *The Voice*

Frustrated with medical costs? Prices of your prescription drugs going up and up, along with everything else? Not qualified for Medicare's Part D? Perhaps you fell into the Part D's donut hole and now have to pay for your prescriptions out of your pocket. Or maybe your current insurance plan does not cover all of your medications.

Well, now there is a way for those who have difficulty purchasing needed medication to get help.

The Washington Prescription Drug Plan uses the state's bulk buying power to negotiate lower cost for prescription drugs from which you, the consumer, can benefit. Savings can run from 16 percent for brand name drugs to 67 percent or more for generics.

The Washington Prescription Drug Plan was designed to benefit all residents of Washington state. There is no income threshold to qualify.

You can use the plan if you're uninsured or underinsured (that is if your insurance doesn't cover all of your prescriptions). The only requirement is that you live in the Evergreen State.

The application form for the plan does not require a Social Security number. All it requires is a physical address. For those residents of Washington state without an address, the postal address of a shelter or church will do.

Seattle-area resident Barbara Matteson, whose husband makes use of the plan, is enthusiastic about it.

"I was thrilled to learn about its existence," she said, adding that she has been handing out applications to the vendors at Pike Place Market, where she works. "Being prepared, just in case, is what I have emphasized to my co-workers."

The Mattesons used to spend \$172 for a 90-day supply of diabetes medication. Us-

ing the card, they spent \$24.95 for a 60-day supply — a savings of 78 percent!

Although not all pharmacies are currently enrolled in the plan, there is an online database which shows the nearest pharmacy that participates in the plan.

If you do not have Internet access, you can call the hotline at 1-800-913-4311. There is also a mail order service available.

The legislation that created the Washington Prescription Drug Plan was won through the lobbying efforts of Washington Community Action Network, a statewide citizen action group, and AARP, among others.

The groups went up against the pharmaceutical lobbies, which felt this statute would take away from their profits. Senate Bill 5471 passed in the 2005 state legislature.

Recently the program broke the barrier of 50,000 Washington State residents who signed up.

"No one expected 50,000 enrollees in the first three months," said Ray Hanley, manager of the WPDP. "(We) needed enough enrollees to create market interest for pharmacies to join, but also needed enough pharmacies to create enrollee interest and, ultimately, convenience. When we started soliciting pharmacies last January, when we had none, we only had 800 enrollees."

For further information, or to enroll in the Washington Prescription Drug Program, visit online at <http://www.rx.wa.gov/> or call 1-800-913-4146.

This plan was fought for by the members of the Washington Community Action Network. If you are interested in becoming a member of this organization, which works for social and economic justice, please visit their Web site at <http://www.washingtoncan.org> or call 206-389-0050.

John Denoyer is a Seattle Housing Authority Section 8 resident and a longtime member of the Washington Community Action Network.

Sign rule

Continued from front page

argued that the law offers public housing tenants' special protection because they are living in public property and because they cannot afford to move if they find the restrictions unreasonable.

Many of the justices' questions focused on how broadly the attorneys' legal arguments could be interpreted and what side effects they could have if they became precedent.

Justice Barbara Madsen questioned whether Dunn could argue that special protection is due to public housing tenants because they're living in government-owned property without accepting that the government can restrict speech under the public forum analysis.

"Can you make one argument without the other?" she asked.

Chief Justice Gerry Alexander asked Fearn whether the Housing Authority owns the entire apartment they're renting to tenants.

"You're not saying that you could preclude tenants from placing pictures on the inside of their apartments, are you?" he asked.

He went on to ask Fearn if tenants have alternative ways of expressing their beliefs publicly, such as on windows or bulletin boards.

When Fearn answered yes, Justice Mary Fairhurst countered that the identity of a speaker will not necessarily be known when they express themselves on a bulletin board.

The sign rule was part of an addendum to tenants' lease agreements that went into effect in 2005. An injunction due to pending litigation has prohibited the Housing Authority from enforcing the rule.

Seattle Animal Shelter stresses need for pet licenses



PHOTO BY CLAIRE MCDANIEL

Bell Tower resident Raymond Vincent pets his fully-licensed Jack Russell Terrier Skoshi. Discounts are available for pet licenses through the City of Seattle.

By CLAIRE MCDANIEL
Seattle Housing Authority

Bell Tower resident Raymond Vincent knew that it was in the best interest of the dog he recently adopted from the Seattle Humane Society and his own peace of mind to get a dog license.

"It's my responsibility as a pet owner to give my dog the best care, as if he were a member of my family," he said.

That care includes making sure his extraordinarily large Jack Russell Terrier named Skoshi (which ironically means "little" in Japanese) is licensed so that if he ever gets out, it will be easier to find him.

Seattle law requires that all cats, dogs and potbelly pigs be licensed. The good news is that the Seattle Animal Shelter's pet licensing offers two discounts that may apply to Seattle-area public housing residents.

Seniors 60 years and older may apply for a Gold Card for Healthy Aging with the City of Seattle's Mayor's office which entitles them to receive a 50 percent discount on regular and replacement pet license fees.

To apply for a Gold Card, you can call the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens at 206-684-0500, go online to <http://www.seattle.gov/humanservices/mosc/goldcard.htm> or pick one up at the Central Building at Third Avenue and Columbia Street, 810 Third Avenue, Suite 350.

The cards are also available at Seattle's Neighborhood Service Centers, Seattle Parks and Recreation Community Centers, Seattle's Animal Control Office, Seattle's Citizens Service Bureau, the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle and at many senior nutrition sites.

People with disabilities may apply for a Flash Card with the Mayor's office which entitles them to receive a 50 percent discount on regular and replacement pet license fees.

You can apply online at <http://www.seattle.gov/humanservices/mosc/flash.htm> or you can obtain a flash card in person at the Central Building at Third Avenue and Columbia Street or by completing an application form and mailing it to the Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens.

The card is also available at two other locations: the Community Services for the Blind and Partially Sighted, located at 9709 3rd Ave. N.E., Suite 100 in Seattle (206-525-5556) and the Special Technology Access Resources Center at 2121 26th Ave. S. in Seattle (206-325-4284).

A representative from Seattle Animal

Shelter put it this way, "Pet licensing is a valuable tool in assisting us in getting animals home. Our main goal is to reunite owner and animal companion. Oftentimes, someone is unexpectedly injured or hospitalized and gets separated from their animal. We want to make sure that we get their animals back to them."

Pet license fees at the Seattle Animal Shelter are \$40 for a one-year license for a dog, or \$20 if the animal is spayed or neutered. A two-year license costs \$62 or \$30 for spayed and neutered dogs.

Cats cost \$25 to license for one year, or \$15 if the animal is spayed or neutered. A two-year license costs \$40 or \$22 for spayed or neutered cats.

National statistics show that only 2 to 3 percent of stray cats that wind up in a shelter make it back to their owner, so representatives from the Seattle Animal Shelter stress the need for cat licensing.

For information on licensing your potbelly pig or your service animal, you can call Seattle Animal Shelter Pet Licensing at 206-386-4262.

To qualify for the reduced spay or neuter license fee, you must submit a copy of a veterinarian's spay or neuter certificate with your payment.

You can purchase a pet license at the Seattle Animal Shelter located at 2061 15th Ave. W., 206-386-4262, seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. excluding major holidays.

Or you can visit any one of the Neighborhood Service Centers, community partners or veterinary clinics in the City of Seattle which are listed on the SAS licensing Web page at <http://www.seattle.gov/animalshelter/licenses.htm>.

Licensing your pet results in many benefits.

If your pet is licensed and is found outside of your home, the Animal Control officer will make every effort to return it to you while they are in the field in order to prevent you or your pet from having to go to the shelter.

The license will also help a vet contact you if your pet becomes injured and is in need of life-saving medical treatment.

Seattle Housing Authority's pet policy for Low-Income Public Housing and Seattle Senior Housing Program residents can be found on the SHA Web site at <http://www.seattlehousing.org/Residents/For-Residents/PetPolicySHA-50-A1.pdf>

If you are unsure of the pet policy in your building, please ask your property manager.

The Voice

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Neighborhood House

Strong Families. Strong Communities. Since 1906.



One to grow on

Garden tips for community gardeners

Remember to keep picking your vegetables

BY ANZA MUENCHOW
Special to *The Voice*

It's July now, and we can discuss harvest concerns for the summer.

I want to remind you to pick your fruiting crops regularly. Do not let them sit on the vines or stalks too long. This will stretch out the harvest period as long as the plant is healthy.

This is especially important for summer squash and beans. Both should be picked a couple times a week so that the plant will continue to produce.

Letting the fruiting parts stay on the plants signals to the plant that it has completed its job and doesn't need to produce anymore this season. The fruiting parts stop blooming, and the plant won't produce the 20 to 30 pounds of delicious produce normal for a summer harvest.

Always remove all the old beans and squashes, even if they're too big to eat or were chewed on by slugs or bugs. Chop up the damaged parts and put them in your compost, turning it into a rich fall mulch.

I've noticed that tomatoes can tolerate being left on the vine for awhile early in the season, and the plant will keep blooming and setting fruit. But then again, how can you let that early, ripe tomato sit there when you are so ready to taste it?

You may want to leave your hot peppers on the bush so that with the dry weather they can develop a real fire in your cooking. I love the inferno pepper that I tried for the first time last year. It can get hot enough for the hottest salsa our family can eat.

Many varieties of sweet peppers also need more time to get the red or yellow colors that look so lovely on our plates. Green peppers are the better producers in our Northwest gardens.

Remember that a healthy diet means eating five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables every day. To some this may seem difficult, but when we have access to fresh produce it is easy.

Outside in your garden you may feel like having a snack. It is easy to pick some peas or raspberries or a few cherry tomatoes.

How much better is that than going inside to grab a handful of chips or a piece

of bread?

When you are on your way home from work, you can take a quick cruise through your garden to select some fresh herbs, a handful of salad greens and some peas or beans to cook for your evening meal.

Any part of your meal you harvest from your garden increases your vegetable intake and reduces our dependency on foreign oil used to ship produce around the western hemisphere or world for that matter.

Besides eating, a timely activity this month in the garden would be planting some fall- and wintering-over crops including kale, purple broccoli, cabbage, choys, chard, spinach and winter lettuce. These plants like to achieve some growth (8 to 10 inches for kale and chard) before the short days and cool temps begin.

Enrich your soil with compost and bone meal before planting. Mix in some garden lime if you haven't added any in the last two years. Usually our soils are too acidic, and this will raise the pH.

Dolomite lime is available at most garden stores, lasts a long time and is usually not too expensive. Summer is a good time to add lime because it mixes into your beds so well when the soil is dry. The soil doesn't clump, so it is more like sifting in flour when you bake.

Lime also helps prevent a dreaded Brassica disease called club root, a soil microbe that causes roots to get all gnarly and stunts plant growth. This is a very difficult disease to manage, so add lime every couple years, especially when you plant these crops.

Watering is extremely important this month, especially when starting any new seeds. Check your soil to see that your irrigation method is actually allowing the water to sink a couple inches into the soil, not just run off. And remember to water your compost.

Enjoy the harvests and share some with your friends and neighbors. Let's get everyone excited about local, seasonal produce.

Anza Muenchow is a farmer and a volunteer with P-Patch.

You can reach her by e-mail at mahafarm@whidbey.net or on the Internet at <http://www.mahafarm.com>.

Section 8

Continued from front page

the board meeting, she received a letter from SHA saying that she would not be terminated from the program.

The Housing Authority says they informed Gbrsilassie in a May conference and her lawyer in a June 5 e-mail that the issues were cleared up and she was not in jeopardy of losing her housing.

Gbrsilassie said she never received that information and instead cried tears of relief when she received the late June letter.

"I know if I had (a) hearing I would not have a home. No people keep the(ir) home after (having a) hearing," she said.

The Tenants Union argues that SHA's Section 8 termination hearing process is fraught with problems and denies tenants' their right to due process.

Attorneys for the Northwest Justice Project are representing tenants in two lawsuits against the Housing Authority which call for the halt of SHA's informal hearing process until a more court-like process is established.

The two groups are demanding that SHA replace its existing hearing officer with a panel of rotating officers who are attorneys or have ample legal experience weighing evidence in court-like situations.

They also request that SHA inform a family of a termination decision and hearing rights in the family's primary language, that they initiate a public process around selecting the hearing officers and that the hearing officer apply relevant law to the facts of the case, among other demands.

If these changes were implemented, the hearing process would go beyond the minimum regulations set by federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, which doesn't require that housing authorities hire hearing officers with legal backgrounds.

And although James Fearn, legal consul for SHA insists that "the hearing process is perfectly legal as it is right now," some change is underway.

Communications Director Virginia Felton said SHA is committed to hiring a rotating panel of hearing officers. A date has not yet been set to begin hiring, and SHA has not yet confirmed whether the new hearing officers will be attorneys.

Fearn said that the fact that 94 percent of termination hearings are decided in favor of SHA is evidence that the Housing Authority doesn't take termination notices lightly. The Tenants' Union says it's evidence that tenants' rights aren't being protected.

Fearn added that SHA instructs the hearing officer to uphold the termination of a family's voucher if there is sufficient evidence to believe the family violated a Section 8 rule.

But Dunn insists that evidence presented by families of mitigating circumstances, such as disabilities or domestic violence, could be legitimate legal defenses that would cause the court to overlook rule violations.

"The hearing officer is not permitted, nor does he have the training and ability, to consider any mitigating circumstances or any legal defenses," Dunn said.

The Housing Authority's Executive Director Tom Tierney wrote in a letter that SHA should not apply the legal standards of court cases to its hearings. "Such formal hearings would be costly and are actually discouraged by HUD," he said.

But the Tenants Union points to the King County Housing Authority, saying



PHOTO BY LYNN SEREDA

Tina Hendrix is being represented by Northwest Justice Project in a lawsuit against the Seattle Housing Authority calling for the halt to the agency's informal Section 8 termination hearings until a more trial-like process is established.

Hendrix received a termination notice from SHA saying she did not provide proper notice of changes in her household composition and of an in-home business.

Hendrix says that her Section 8 caseworker asked her to fill out paperwork long after finding out about the changes to her household.

they have found a way to hire attorneys to oversee the process.

The Voice found that KCHA allocates \$8,000 annually to manage their Section 8 hearings. Graeme Atkey, director of the Section 8 program at KCHA, says the agency hasn't come close to spending the entire budget this year.

Despite administering roughly the same number of vouchers, SHA spent over three times as much on its Section 8 hearings in 2006.

Felton confirms that SHA paid Weldon Mediation Services \$25,400 last year. With a total of 55 hearings, that means each hearing cost approximately \$462 dollars. Even if KCHA spent its entire budget in 2006, it wouldn't have paid more than \$444 dollars on each of its approximately 18 hearings.

Although both housing authorities claim that they use the informal hearings as a last resort, fewer KCHA residents request a hearing to overturn a termination decision.

"We believe in clear communication with the tenants from the very beginning," says Atkey. "We try and work out any disputes or misunderstandings in a conference before we send out a termination notice. This cuts down on the amount of hearings that are requested."

Tierney says that SHA staff is making a concerted effort to counsel Section 8 participants before a termination hearing. Since November 2005 conferences have increased three-fold to an average of about 30 a month, he said, while the number of hearings has remained constant.

Gbrsilassie says that the majority of her communication with SHA came after she received her termination notice, not before.

Section 8 Manager Barbara Strayer said SHA sometimes issues termination letters to ensure people respond to their requests for a conference when allegations are made.

"We have to follow-up on this stuff. Taxpayer dollars go into this program, and we need to make sure the money is spent the right way," she said. "Our intent is to conference with people...We try really, really hard not to take people's housing away."

Still, Gbrsilassie credits Tenants Union Organizer Emily Paddison for helping her work out misunderstandings with SHA.

"I am so lucky, so many people put pressure (on SHA) to help me," she said.

The Northwest Justice Project lawsuits are currently pending in King County Superior Court and U.S. District Court.



Reader's viewpoint

Readers of *The Voice* share their ideas

Will SHA stop posting signs on tenants' doors?

BY FORTUNATO VELASQUEZ
Special to *The Voice*

The Seattle Housing Authority has said they do not want "clutter" in the common areas of Low-Income Public Housing communities. I agree with Keith Gormezano (Reader's Viewpoint, June 2007) that this position is hogwash.

My reference, of course, is to the "right of possession" to apartment doors, a case that was heard by the Washington State Supreme Court in late May.

My complaint is the taping of notices to the front of my apartment door.

For the past seven years I have repeatedly asked SHA staff to not tape notices on my door. I am often gone for a few days at a time and multiple notices taped to my front door broadcasts to anyone who walks by that there is no one home.

In my opinion it is indeed a violation of my tenant privacy rights and the public disclosure act. And talk about "visual

clutter." To see the very same SHA notice taped to every single tenant's door — 120 units in my building — onto every single entryway and inside the elevators as well, results in a gross preponderance of clutter perpetrated by SHA itself.

The policy is a depersonalizing, de-meaning and dehumanizing method of conveying information that treats residents as mere cattle.

Not only that, multiple taped notices on the door broadcasting a tenant's absence from the premises provides an opportunity for theft. I have asked SHA over and over to please slip the notices under my door, and the sign on my door clearly instructs them in BIG letters to do that, to no avail.

If the State Supreme Court holds the present action in the tenants' favor, perhaps a cease-and-desist court order by a local court will motivate compliance with my wishes.

Fortunato Velasquez is a resident of Capitol Park.



Health Notes

A column devoted to your well-being

Families and chemical dependency

By JANE POISSON, LICSW
Special to The Voice

Chemical dependency (also known as addiction, drug addiction or alcoholism) is a family disease. It affects approximately one out of three families in the United States.

A chemically-dependent person is someone who has lost control over the use of drugs and/or alcohol and is using these substances in increasing amounts despite negative consequences.

This behavior causes problems in relationships with family and friends, as well as conflicts at work and school. The addict and family may feel angry, fearful and hopeless.

Chemical dependency is progressive, meaning that the disease and resulting problems get worse over time.

All of those who care for a chemically-dependent person are affected by the disease. It is said that the behavior of the addict negatively affects at least four people close to him or her.

Chemical dependency creates a merry-go-round of hope and despair for those who love an addicted person.

Addiction of a sibling or parent has serious consequences for children. "Children of Addicted Parents: Important Facts," written by the National Association for Children of Alcoholics, states that approximately one in four children is exposed to family alcohol abuse or alcohol dependence.

Children from addicted families have a high rate of behavior problems. These children benefit from supportive adult efforts to help them.

Help is available for anyone who cares and is affected by a chemically-dependent person. Education about addiction and its consequences for both the addict and friends and family is very important.

Addiction is a serious problem and like other illnesses, addiction is no one's fault. Support groups that help individuals express feelings related to addiction and provide effective coping skills can help.

Talk to your medical provider and ask about what help might be available for you or your loved one.

Help can take many forms, including talking with other family members, friends and relatives, self-help groups such as Al-anon, Al-ateen or Nar-anon, working with teachers, nurses, counselors or social workers at your school, local substance abuse treatment centers or medical providers.

And don't forget about pastoral counseling or other programs available through places of worship, counseling or mental health agencies and youth workers and youth groups.

Families don't have to face chemical dependency alone. There are resources in our community to help.

Jane Poisson is a behavioral health consultant working with Puget Sound Neighborhood Health Centers.

Support circles for disabled violence victims now forming

By LYNN SEREDA
Special to The Voice

One of the hardest consequences of domestic violence, trauma and sexual abuse is isolation.

When violence and trauma happens to a disabled person, their experience of isolation and fear can be much greater because they may be already experiencing isolation due to the social stigma of their disability.

Communities Against Rape and Abuse is an anti-violence organization which uses a community-organizing strategy focusing on marginalized communities including the African-American community, the Chicano youth community and the disabled community.

Recently CARA received a grant from the City of Seattle to start Disability PRIDE circles for disabled people who are currently victims of abusive situations or are survivors of sexual assault or incest.

PRIDE stands for Power, Reflection, Interdependence, Dialogue and Education.

The PRIDE circles focus on the disabled person figuring out what strengths they have and what kind of supportive network they can create in order to be successful and increase their sense of safety.

Increasing knowledge of sexual violence and trauma and decreasing isolation for the person experiencing DV or trauma is the goal of the program.

The circles identify and create a network of supporters who are aware of the disabled person's current situation and work with the person to create a safety strategy. Thus the circles function as a network, helping to move the disabled person out of isolation and into a state of interdependence.

PRIDE circles are unique in that they can be formed right where the person lives.

The "center" of the circle is the individual who has experienced violence and the circle itself can be composed of neighbors, relatives and others who are brought together to help the affected person create a sense of safety.

A CARA staff person functions as a consultant in setting up the circle and is involved in an advisory capacity. The CARA team has undergone training through the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs. Any disabled person regardless of ethnicity can participate in the PRIDE circles project.

Executive Director Theryn Kigvamasva'Vashti explained that for many disabled people, dealing with the criminal justice system can be extremely difficult because the system reflects society's negative opinions about the disabled.

Often, a disabled person is simply not believed, and there can be consequences or further violence if they speak up. Also, the fear of losing what independence and self-determination a disabled person has can keep them silent.

Kigvamasva'Vashti described this process as one of "objectification." Because many disabled people are objectified, it leaves them vulnerable and susceptible to abuse.

In addition to helping out with the PRIDE circles, CARA staff members have information about services that exist for survivors of abuse. The group has done other work with the disabled community, including a film and discussion series and disabled art projects and exhibitions.

For more information about CARA, the PRIDE circles or their other projects, contact Kigvamasva'Vashti at 206-322-4856 or by e-mail at theryn@cara-seattle.org.

Lynn Sereda is a Seattle Housing Authority Section 8 resident.

Take advantage of offers for free stuff

By KEITH GORMEZANO
Special to The Voice

There are many ways to save money by paying attention to the special promotions that companies offer to get or keep you as a customer.

Sometimes, all you have to do is agree to receive an occasional e-mail, save coupons on product boxes, read or listen to ads or allow your vehicle to be a billboard.

Other times, you have to be willing to be patient.

And sometimes, things are simply free because organizations understand the importance of being available to everyone.

Restaurants

Dukes Chowderhouse and other restaurants will offer you a free meal on your birthday if you sign up to receive their e-mail newsletter. Also, look at the hostess's stand at the front of a restaurant for a fishbowl to enter your contact information for a monthly free meal drawing.

Gift cards

If you subscribe to the Seattle Times or Post-Intelligencer and agree to go to direct pay by credit card, they will give you a \$10 to \$20 gift card.

Free DVDs

Some of the Kellogg's cereal boxes have coupons that you can collect and redeem for free DVDs. All you pay is the 63 cents in postage needed to mail them in. I have gotten eight.

Free bank accounts

Many financial institutions like WaMu offer free checking for life. Some, like Key Bank were recently offering a digital camera in exchange for opening up a new personal or business account and engaging in specified transactions.

Free long distance

PhoneHog at <http://www.phonehog.com>

is a company that gives you free minutes for entering your e-mail address, zip code or other information to offers from advertisers on their Web site.

Offers include six free phone minutes for entering a contest for a plasma TV, 20 minutes for submitting a query for health insurance, 30 minutes for requesting information about medication for specific diseases and 190 minutes for trying out a dating site.

It is a good idea to get an alternate e-mail address from Hotmail or Yahoo so your regular e-mail box is not cluttered. You will get a lot of spam after you respond to these offers.

You can use your long distance minutes by calling a 1-800 number and entering your pin. There is no limit on the number of minutes you can have.

The company will send you a "membership" card with the 800 number and your personal pin.

Free gas

If you drive an insured vehicle more than 1,000 miles a month or park it on a busy street, <http://www.freegashelp.com> will send you a \$30 gas card in exchange for allowing two magnetic signs from various advertisers on your doors.

They also have an auto wrap program paying \$200 a month for turning your car into a driving billboard.

Free teeth cleaning

There are alternatives to paying health clinics to get your teeth cleaned.

If you have not had them cleaned in several years, mycleanteeth@hotmail.com or 206-267-2618 is recruiting volunteers to serve as cleaning patients for dental hygienists testing for their Washington State license.

You'll feel better as a result.

Please see "Free stuff" on page 5

Camping

Continued from front page

dent and try to guess their identity.

As a hint, the other person had to make a noise. Usually, the mystery student would let out an unintentional giggle and their identity would be immediately revealed.

Le earned a Masters degree in Social Work from Washington University in St. Louis, Mo. and came back to Seattle excited to put his degree to a good cause.

After Lovell graduated with an undergraduate degree in International Studies from the University of Washington, the two teamed up as AmeriCorps volunteers to lead the program, focused on these ambitious youth who have to straddle two worlds.

Le, or "Mr. Vu" as his students affectionately call him, explains how the program helps students at various levels.

"Some students were born here but others just arrived, so they all have different levels of English skills," he said. "It is especially hard for the older students because they had to leave all their friends behind in Vietnam... They show up to this strange country with no English skills and few friends, and it is really tough."

Lovell and Le are seeking funding to implement other projects, including a parents' advocacy project to help Vietnamese

parents better understand the nature of the school system and how to get involved.

"Vietnamese parents value education, but don't know how to navigate the mainstream system," Le said.

Out of all the exciting and dramatic possibilities for things that didn't happen during VFA's camping trip, the event deserves praise for constant laughs and overall high morale among the students and tutors.

Le and Lovell have clearly made a positive impact on the lives of these youth in the Vietnamese community.

Social change can be exciting, even if no one is chased by bears.

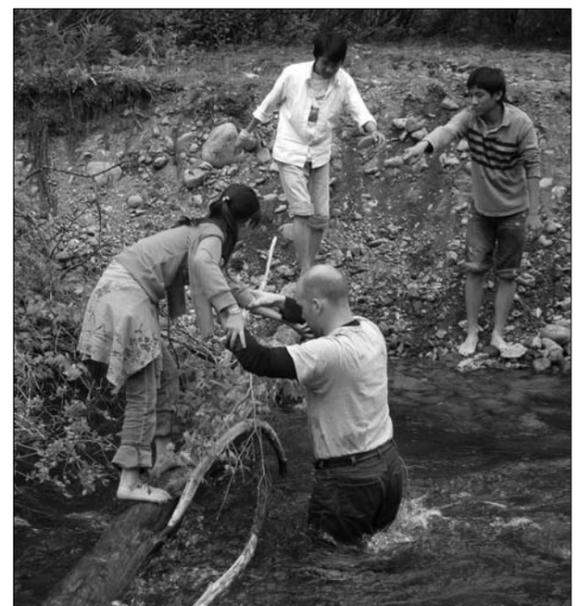


PHOTO BY ALYSSA MARTIN

James Lovell (in water) helps the Vietnamese students in his after-school tutoring program cross a river on a recent camping trip.

Jackson Park student wins award from mayor

CITY OF SEATTLE

The City of Seattle's mayor, Greg Nickels, presented awards to 24 outstanding middle school students in late May.

The Mayor's Scholar awards honor the students for service to their schools and communities.

Among the students honored was Meron Gurmu, a resident of Jackson Park, a Seattle Housing Authority community.

Each student received \$500 that can be used for education or donated to a nonprofit organization of their choice. They also were presented with a letterman jacket and certificate.

Criteria for selection include overcoming obstacles or meeting challenges, giving back to the community and maintaining good academic standing.

Students wrote short essays about how they contribute to their community and how they would use the \$500 award. In addition, students were required to provide several recommendations from adults familiar with their service work.

"This award allows us to recognize Seattle's next generation of leaders," Nickels said. "Service to others is the foundation of a strong community, and I'm glad we can help these promising young people with their education and service goals."

Meron Gurmu is in the seventh grade at Eckstein Middle School and emigrated two years ago from Ethiopia. She volunteers at church, helping to teach U.S.-born Ethiopians to speak Amharic, one of their native languages.

She is also a teen intern at the Youth



PHOTO COURTESY OF CITY OF SEATTLE

Meron Gurmu (center) pictured with (from left to right) Seattle philanthropist Ken Alhadeff and Mayor Greg Nickels.

Tutoring Program, helping students with their homework and reading comprehension. Her personal goal is to help kids and make a positive change.

Gurmu plans to use her award toward college to become an accountant, like her father. She wants to do pro bono work for people who need help and also teach high school students interested in the accounting field.

Her Youth Tutoring Program supervisor says: "It is impressive enough when a student so new to the country can speak with such clarity; it is an entirely other thing that she can manage her full schedule and still make time for her community."

The Mayor's Scholars awards program is coordinated by the Office for Education, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods and is funded entirely through private donations to the Alliance for Education, a 501c3 organization. For more information, call 206-233-5118.

Free stuff

Continued from page 4

You can also check the Seattle Weekly and Craig's List for other companies offering this free service.

Free cremation

Medcure offers you free cremation in exchange for donating your whole body after you die to medical science and education.

The organization was created to assist medical researchers and educators in finding cures and improved treatments for diseases. Their mission is to serve as a link between people who wish to donate and the medical community.

Medical researchers and educators within the United States use donated non-transplantable organs and tissue to help discover cures for diseases and develop new and effective treatments and therapies.

Most people are eligible regardless of age, disease or state of health. For more information call 1-866-560-2525 or visit <http://www.medcure.org>.

Another place to donate your body to science is the Body Donation Program, WWAMI Medical Program, P.O. Box 643510, Washington State University, Pullman, WA. 99164-3510.

For more information call 509-335-2602 or visit http://www.wsu.edu/~wwami/body_donor/faq.htm.

This program handles donations for the states of Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana and Idaho.

Receive faxes or voice mail free

K7.net, at <http://www.k7.net>, will give you a local fax number to receive faxes that get converted into an image file and can be

sent to you via e-mail or downloaded from their site. You can store up to 20 faxes and voice mails on their site.

The only restriction is that you must use the service at least once every 30 days to keep it active.

Free anything

Freecycle is a very active online community where people post items they no longer need. Others can reply to them or post their own "item wanted ad." The users are responsible to contact the people who have the items to arrange delivery or pick up.

Go to <http://www.freecycle.org/display.php?region=US+West+Coast> (scroll down to Washington State) to find a group near you. The Seattle freecycle group, at <http://group.yahoo.com/group/freecycleseattle>, has over 9,000 members.

Make sure that you follow their posting formats.

Free entry to local museums

On certain days of the month, some museums are free from 5 to 8 p.m. In Seattle, it is the first Thursday of the month for the Seattle Art Museum, the Seattle Asian Art Museum, Wing Luke, Museum of Flight, the EMP as well as local galleries.

For the Bellevue Art Museum it is the first Friday. In Tacoma, it is the third Thursday for the Museum of Glass, the Tacoma Art Museum and the Washington State History Museum.

A wonderful opportunity to experience the arts at a low cost.

Keith Gormezano lives in the Seattle Senior Housing Program building Phinney Terrace. This is the last of a four-part series on getting free stuff.

North Seattle groups, SHA residents land city funds

BY DORENE CORNWELL
Special to The Voice

The City of Seattle's Department of Neighborhoods awarded \$12,000 from its Small and Simple fund last month for the "Creating Neighborhood Connections" training project, involving Seattle Housing Authority resident leaders, the North Seattle Family Center, the Lake City Neighborhood Service Center, the Lake City Chamber of Commerce and SHA community building staff.

The funds will be used to conduct a set of workshops entitled "Getting Involved in your Neighborhood" in the Lake City/Northgate area. They will also support disaster preparedness training sessions and other workshops.

Participants will build connections with one another and their neighborhood by talking about their passions and mapping favorite everyday places.

"We are a group of fun, passionate, energetic people with varying abilities, who are interested in connecting with our neighbors," said Cinda Lium, a Denny Terrace resident and an active member of the steering committee that applied for the funds. "We look at people's gifts and talents first, and we make things happen in the community. We strive to connect across differences in cultures, languages, backgrounds and abilities as part of the whole Lake City/Northgate family."

Jerry Ingram, a Lake City House resident, joined the steering committee last March.

"I used my fundraising skills, and we have received over \$2,000 in books, coffee,

backpacks, pizzas, pies, office supplies and other items," he said.

All Small and Simple awards must be matched with donations and volunteer labor, and the steering committee will be working to raise \$6,000 in matching funds.

This summer, the steering committee will be coordinating fire safety and disaster preparedness training sessions, and the Red Cross will be offering a three-part workshop on public speaking and presentation skills. These trainings will not only provide valuable information about emergency preparedness, they will teach participants how to educate other people about disaster survival, organizers said.

The "Getting Involved in your Neighborhood" training series will start in September. If you are interested in these workshops or would like more information, please contact Center Park resident Dorene Cornwell at 206-524-8746 or by e-mail at DoreneFC@aol.com.

This project includes funding for a part-time coordinator. For more information, the job description or to find out about the application process, please contact Lium at 206-322-3291 or by e-mail at cindalu@winisp.net.

The resident members of the "Creating Neighborhood Connections" steering committee are Dorene Cornwell and Jim Bush of Center Park, Cinda Lium of Denny Terrace, Jerry Ingram, Deborah Kidd and Debbie Smith of Lake City House and Martin Qualters of Ballard House.

Dorene Cornwell is a resident of the Seattle Housing Authority high-rise Center Park.

Input sought from residents near I-90 in east King County

BY ERIN STUBER
Special to the Voice

Tired of sitting in traffic on Interstate 90? Frustrated by congested highway entrances and exits? Annoyed there's nothing you can do about it?

While there is no quick fix for major traffic problems, there is something you can do today to start creating a solution: The Washington State Department of Transportation needs you to help identify transportation-related problems on I-90.

WSDOT is looking at ways to relieve congestion and improve safety between Eastgate Way in Bellevue and 468th Avenue in North Bend.

The agency wants to hear from residents who live in communities near the highway, from as far west as Eastside Terrace to as far east as Si View, to help identify transportation-related problems.

WSDOT will work with local agencies to create a list of projects to enhance safety and reduce congestion on the highway.

"This is a great opportunity for drivers to help shape the future of a major highway," said Michell Mouton of the WSDOT communications team.

Once completed in spring of next year, local agencies will use the study as a guide to make decisions about where to invest public resources over the next 20 years to improve safety and mobility on I-90.

WSDOT Corridor Planning Manager Richard Warren said that the study will provide community members in the I-90 study area a blueprint to take to their elected officials when seeking funding for the projects.

"These studies will tell us what needs to be funded in the future," he said. "There are things we already know, but there's more that drivers and residents who live near these highways can tell us."

Drivers are encouraged to visit the WSDOT Web page to learn more about route development planning and to provide valuable feedback to WSDOT planning staff. Visit <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/planning/RDP/I90/EastgateTo465th.htm> to submit your input online.

For more information, contact Mouton at 206-464-1249.

Erin Stuber is a communications consultant for the Washington State Department of Transportation. She works with transportation projects and communities in King County.

Clarification

In the article "The Voice has an advertising section" in the June issue of The Voice, Keith Gormezano was listed as a Seattle Housing Authority resident. He is actually a resident of the Seattle Senior Housing Program, an SHA community.



Neighborhood House

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.

Kids enjoy face painting
JUNETEENTH DRAWS CROWD
 See page 7



SHA NEWS

July
2007

News and information about Seattle's neighborhoods

SHA brings five proposed policy revisions to JPAC

By JEFF ARNIM
 Seattle Housing Authority

Five suggested policy revisions — including changes to the way in which community activities are funded — were presented to Seattle Housing Authority's Low-Income Public Housing Joint Policy Advisory Committee last month.

The policy advisory committee is a group of residents who provide input to SHA on proposed policy changes.

The Housing Authority currently uses revenue from vending machines to support the activities of resident councils and other resident groups.

Funding is used for resident projects, materials and equipment that promote community building, education, crime prevention or good health.

The proposed policy, a response to increasing time demands associated with the program's administration, would budget funding for activities on a yearly basis, instead of tying the amount of available funding to vending machine proceeds.

For 2008, SHA would set aside funds equal to the vending proceeds generated from the one-year period ending March 31, 2007. For 2009 and beyond, funding allocations would be based either on a building's unit count, or on some other method.

Residents at the JPAC meeting asked a number of questions about the proposed plan including whether money would roll over from one year to the next. Many advocated for sticking with the current vending machine system.

The Housing Authority is also considering changes to its community service and self-sufficiency policies, removing requirements related to community service and focusing solely on self-sufficiency goals.

Under the updated guidelines, all non-exempt residents would be required to achieve economic self-sufficiency goals, which could include employment, using the Job Connection services, vocational education or another agreed-upon program.

Residents with disabilities and those who care for small children are among the many people who are exempt from the policy. Some committee members supported the change, saying volunteer work should never be considered mandatory.

The third proposed change involves increasing the security deposit amounts for Low-Income Public Housing units. The Housing Authority seeks to increase the deposit amount by \$50 for all units, excluding those located at NewHolly, Rainier Vista or High Point. The new amount would apply to new residents and to those transferring to a different unit.

In response to questions, SHA assured committee members that payment plans are available for those unable to come up with the security deposit.

The Housing Authority is additionally looking to eliminate its voluntary transfer policy. Originally adopted in 2000, the policy aimed to give public housing residents the chance to transfer to a different unit without having to provide a reason for the transfer.

Although residents can currently transfer without justification, they are required to pay an administrative fee to cover unit turnover costs, which currently stands at \$650. The new policy would still allow residents to move without providing a specific reason but would eliminate the current administrative fee.

Lastly, SHA is proposing to change the policy that governs how people can be added to a resident's lease, as well as how current household members can be removed from the lease.

Policy language has been added to clearly note the requirement that anyone added to a lease must be screened for eligibility and suitability, in accordance with existing federal and local guidelines. Additional language specifies the process used to remove an adult from a lease, to ensure protection of each person's tenancy rights.

Due to time constraints, not much discussion took place on these last two policy changes, but residents were encouraged to send written comments to SHA.

Comments on the proposed changes to community activity funding will be accepted up until the revised policy is finalized.

Residents wishing to comment on changes to security deposits, voluntary transfers and adding or removing occupants from leases may do so through July 31. Comments should be submitted to Donna Foss, either through e-mail at dfoss@seattlehousing.org, or by mail to Seattle Housing Authority, P.O. Box 19028, Seattle, WA 98109.

Comments on changes to the community service requirement are expected to be accepted starting at the end of July.

Additional information from Voice Editor Stacy Schwandt was added to this report.

Design process yields new building color schemes



PHOTO BY SVEN KOEHLER

Capitol Park resident Joseph Federer points out the different paint samples used by the designers to finalize the color choice before the building is painted.

By SVEN KOEHLER
 Seattle Housing Authority

It's hard not to notice the new paint jobs brightening up the exteriors of many of the high-rise buildings in the homeWorks renovation program.

New colors at Green Lake Plaza and Lictonwood drew praise last year, and more buildings are about to be painted.

About half of the 22 buildings in homeWorks will get a new color scheme, and most others will get a thorough cleaning of the exterior walls.

Of course, the beauty of the new paint jobs is more than just skin deep. In addition to looking good, the paint and colored stucco provide weather protection for the buildings, helping keep residents' apartments dry.

But there is no doubt that the colors themselves attract most peoples' attention.

Capitol Park resident Steve Shuster, who has a background in design, is fond of using color to brighten his world and says he is looking forward to the upcoming changes.

"It's amazing what the right colors can do," he said.

Many residents wonder where the color choices come from. Last year at Green Lake Plaza, resident Rogina Springer was initially not convinced by the paint colors as they were being applied. However, once the building was done, she agreed with her neighbors who say they can hardly believe it is the same public housing building.

This was one of the intentions of the design team from DKA, the homeWorks architects. Donald King, the principal of the firm, plans to make the renovated buildings stand shoulder-to-shoulder with all the newly-constructed high-rises in Seattle.

Before the paint actually hits the walls, a considerable process leads to color selection. Initial choices are discussed among the firm's architects. While it might seem

tempting to hold a vote in the building on which colors people like best, factors beyond just what looks good together need to be considered.

Designer Noemi Cortes-Sonnega, who is involved with the projects, says she chose earth tones for the homeWorks buildings.

"Especially for high-rises where some people are bound to their apartments, I felt it was important to have a connection to nature," she said.

Project lead Chet Wing added to her criteria. "The color design should work with the structure of the building and with the character of the neighborhood," he said.

For example, at International Terrace concrete beams with decorative diamond-shaped designs were painted a dark red color last year, highlighting the beams while still reflecting other colors found nearby in the International District.

Sometimes, the building itself brings out nuances in the color that are different than they look on paper. Shadows from overhangs or protruding columns can change the way the paint looks. So, it helps to see the color on site in a variety of natural conditions, such as direct sunlight and overcast skies.

At Capitol Park, two different schemes were painted directly onto a section of the building, one a dark grayish-blue and the other a muted green. Since this unusual mock-up was right in front of the dumpsters, residents had time to discuss the colors.

From an informal tally of opinions overheard in the parking lot, it seemed most people preferred the green. The palate also included a terra cotta accent color, but Wing said the mock-up revealed that a wood-toned brown would make a better fit with the surrounding buildings.

Capitol Park resident Carol Hahn preferred the green color, which was eventually selected for the building.

"I'm looking forward to the new paint because it will be a nice change," she said.

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Scholarship winners shine

HIGHER EDUCATION PROJECT

Four youth were recently awarded Higher Education Project Dream Big scholarships. The scholarships are for \$1,000 and are to help with college expenses. Each scholar lives in Seattle Housing Authority assisted housing and each has a wonderful life story.

Amelmal Wondimhunegn lives at Rainier Vista and is headed to Western Washington University. She is the first of the Dream Big scholarship winners to be chosen especially in honor of the late Judy McBride, a much beloved Rainier Vista resident leader.

Wondimhunegn attended Garfield High School and has said of her hopes, "I am a determined first-generation, college bound student seeking higher education as a means to expand my knowledge, meet new people and discover a better understanding of the world. I aspire to serve as a role model to both my community and family and hope to provide greater opportunities for myself and others."

Wondimhunegn's hero is her mother. A trip to Ethiopia two years ago was a turning point in Wondimhunegn's life. Her little cousins in the village inspired her as she saw them run eagerly to a school that had no books.

She said, "their love and deep desire for an education... has motivated me."

Another Dream Big scholarship recipient is Ayan Hassan, also a graduating senior at Garfield High School. By February she had earned a 3.5 grade point average while taking an array of challenging college preparatory courses, including calculus, physics, chemistry and Advanced Place-

ment American government.

Hassan's family comes from Somalia, and her parents are dedicated to seeing that their children get a good education.

"In my family, school has always been our first priority," Hassan said. "I am truly grateful for this because without (my parents') encouragement to do well in school, I wouldn't be where I am today."

Hassan wants to become a doctor and dreams of "helping the innocent people back home in Somalia who are unable to flee the country."

She will be attending the University of Washington in the fall.

Jabir Robele also graduated from Garfield last month. Although he said Garfield was "not an easy place" because of the challenges of learning English (now only one of many languages Robele speaks), he stuck with it and worked hard in his ESL classes. Jabir refused to be defeated by the challenges he faced, and he earned a position on the Garfield soccer team. He loves soccer, has run cross country and was a member of Garfield's track and field team.

Robele's family comes from Oromia, a region in Southern Ethiopia. Robele plans to become a pharmacist, saying, "In my early childhood, I saw a lot of children (who) were sick and there were no pharmacists to help them."

He said he hopes after achieving this dream to return to Oromia to help provide medicine for his people.

The fourth Dream Big scholarship recipient is Michelle Chavez, who lives at NewHolly. Chavez currently attends Seattle Central Community College, where she's

Please see "Scholarships" on page 5

Self-Sufficiency program helps you save money

SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Seattle Housing Authority would like to invite all Cedarvale Village, Jackson Park Village, Scattered-Sites, Yesler Terrace and high-rise residents to take advantage of a great opportunity through our Family Self-Sufficiency program.

If you are interested in going to school to advance your skills, plan to start working or are currently employed and want to increase your salary within the next five years, the FSS program could be for you.

The FSS program offers you a chance to use your future increases in rent from employment to be matched and deposited

into a savings account for you.

All you have to do is set goals for yourself, then as your rent and employment income increase we begin depositing money into a savings account for you.

You don't have anything to lose, but will have the opportunity to gain a savings account instead of your money just going for rent. Once you accomplish your goals, exceed the income limits or purchase a home you will receive the total balance in of your account at that time. It's that simple.

If you are interested, please contact Sophia Phillips, FSS specialist at 206-615-3318.



Letters to the Editor

Readers of The Voice speak out

TO THE EDITOR,

In the June issue of The Voice, there was a correction that raised some concern among Tenants Union staff, members and supporters.

The correction addressed an article in the May issue of The Voice which detailed the work of the Douglas Arms tenant committee and their successful negotiating meeting in April with Seattle Housing Authority Executive Director Tom Tierney.

The Tenants Union applauds SHA for coming to that meeting and to agreeing, in good faith and in front of a large community of witnesses as well as in writing, to a range of tenant requests that collectively address the critical housing issues these SHA tenants face.

The eight agreements are complicated

and detailed, but successfully work out accountability to the Douglas Arms tenants and their needs. Despite the tone and brevity of the correction, we believe that SHA committed to these agreements in good faith and in full understanding of what they were signing.

We expect to work together to see the fulfillment of the protections and visions these commitments represent. Indeed, SHA agreed to a follow-up meeting last month organized by the tenant committee, and we hope to move forward on our shared vision for the Douglas Arms and the Rainier Valley.

From,
Michele Thomas
Tenants Union of Washington
Community Organizer

'Save my Spot' system in use

BY SCOTT FREUTEL

Seattle Housing Authority

Seattle Housing Authority's Low-Income Public Housing program inaugurated its new waiting list check-in system on June 1, right on schedule.

On the first day, 580 people successfully checked in by telephone, ensuring their continuing position on one or more waiting lists. An additional 148 people checked in on the system's Web site, <http://www.savemyspot.org>.

By the end of the first week of operation, more than 1,500 people had used Save My Spot.

The check-in system is designed to help move people into housing more quickly by reducing the amount of time required for maintaining, updating and checking waiting lists. It requires people on waiting lists — applicants who have chosen to wait for housing in one or two of SHA's Low-Income Public Housing buildings — to call in, or to check in on the Web site, once a month, on any day of the month, at any time — 24 hours a day.

People who use the telephone system can choose to hear instructions in nine languages besides English. In the first week, most people used the system's English options.

In descending order, other languages used were Cantonese, Vietnamese, Spanish, Somali, Mandarin, Russian, Amharic and Tigrinya.

People who use the Web site see instructions in English and in 16 other languages.

By June 15, around 30 percent of those on the waiting list had checked in. By that same time, more than a thousand letters sent to those on the waiting list had been returned to SHA as undeliverable. Factoring

this into the calculation brings the proportion of those who have checked in and are still active on the waiting list to about 50 percent.

In late May, the Housing Authority admissions team hosted a meeting of service providers and other interested people at PorchLight to introduce the system and explain why it was being instituted, how and by whom it will be used and how it will be monitored. Nearly 30 people attended, including representatives from the Low Income Housing Institute, Compass Center, New Beginnings, Arc of King County, the Tenants Union, Valley Cities Counseling, Hopelink and the YWCA.

Some people who attended the meeting raised concerns about the system's accessibility to disabled and homeless people and people who are not fluent in English. The admissions staff acknowledged those concerns and suggested a follow-up meeting in a few months' time to hear and share feedback and to discuss suggestions for improving the system.

Dennis Hall, admissions manager, pointed out that SHA piloted the telephone check-in system in two buildings in 2005.

"We are monitoring this program very carefully to identify applicants who need extra help in learning how to use the new system," he said. "We will make accommodations for medical or other reasons, including lack of proficiency in English."

Hall pointed out that information about Save My Spot had been mailed in mid-May to every person on every Low-Income Public Housing waiting list — over 8,600 people in all — along with reminder cards and clear instructions on how to check in by telephone or on the Internet. A reminder letter and a 16-language instructions sheet were sent in late June to people who had not yet checked in.

Delicious produce available from SHA gardens

BY SEATTLE MARKET GARDENS

The Seattle Market Gardens are a partnership between in-city farmers and consumers resulting in weekly deliveries of high-quality, farm-fresh, organic produce during the growing season.

The Seattle Market Gardens program is a collaboration between the non-profit P-Patch Trust and the City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods' P-Patch Program's Cultivating Communities.

Providing organic gardening space for 200 families, the Cultivating Communities Program has 12 community gardens within the Seattle Housing Authority communities of Rainier Vista, Yesler Terrace, High Point and NewHolly and in Mt. Baker Village Apartments.

Some of these gardeners participate in the Seattle Market Garden program, which offers bags of produce to program subscribers.

Subscribers get about 20 weeks of seasonal organic produce including carrots, salad mix, peas, onions, beans, cucumbers, Asian and European cooking greens, tomatoes and potatoes.

Each week subscribers receive a bag of 8 to 15 items including opportunities to sample unfamiliar produce and learn new recipes.

A full share of produce which feeds four to six adults costs \$500 or about \$23 per week. A half share of the produce which feeds two to three adults costs \$300 or

Please see "Gardens" on page 4

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.

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

Beacon Tower forms tea group



PHOTO BY CHUNG PING LAM

Beacon Tower residents play balloon volleyball at their Tea Time group kickoff.

By CHUNG PING LAM

Translation by Dynamic Language Center

Early last month, the hot sun of early summer warmed up the world. A breeze pleasantly cooled the universe. Joy overflowed the building as waves of laughter rolled through. This is where the Beacon Tower Tea Time group was created.

More than a month ago, Seattle Housing Authority Community Builders Naomi Chang and Marcia Johnson offered suggestions, guidance and heartfelt help to residents in order to invigorate their lives, promote mutual exchange and deepen friendships. Since there are many Asian residents in this building, a joint decision was made to set up a Tea Time group.

With their skillful guidance, patient help and strong support, a five-member committee was set up consisting of Banny Cheung, Yi Zhong Li, Young Hy Uy, Si Tu Li Zhen and Chung Ping Lam. The group thrived thanks to everyone's effort and support.

For the Tea Time event, Mr. Cheung contributed ideas, money and energy and donated two watches and three traditional red "pocket money" envelopes as prizes. He purchased food and selflessly offered a coffee maker, creamer and prize coupons from his home.

Mr. Li also contributed money and energy, donated two red envelopes as prizes and brought coffee and sugar from his own home. On the day of the event, he came very early in the morning to arrange the meeting site, boil tea and lay out the food.

Mr. Lam donated two prizes and balloons, wrote banners and arranged the meeting site. Ah Fang and Mrs. Wang brought two large plates of baked desserts which they had prepared themselves. These looked good, tasted delicious and won praises.

The Tea Time group began with a game of balloon volleyball. Mr. Chang presided over the meeting. He made a speech that elaborated on the purposes of the Tea Time group and then introduced the five-member committee.

Next, Mr. Lam shared a list of the top 10 healthy foods and Mr. Li talked about how to protect one's eyes and maintain a healthy diet. Activities took place to liven up the atmosphere including a magician's performance, songs and story telling. Finally, raffle tickets were drawn.

Among sounds of joy, everyone had their photos taken. The Tea Time event ended with everyone reluctant to part.

After the meeting, Beacon Tower Community Council President JoAnne Benefield

林先生

友誼處處 歡樂滿堂 — 記《碧近塔居民聯誼會》成立

六月六日，初夏艷陽，溫暖乾坤，清風宇宙，涼爽宜人，笑聲陣陣，歡樂滿堂。這是《碧近塔居民聯誼會》成立的現場。

早在一個多月前，大家為了活躍生活，促進互相交流，加深彼此友誼，在SHA工作人員張姑娘 Naomi Chang和Marcia Johnson的提議、指導和熱心幫助下，根據本大廈亞裔居民較多的特點，決定成立《居民聯誼會》，在她們的循循善誘、耐心幫助和大力支持下，先成立五人小組（張耀枝Banny Cheung、李溢忠Yi Zhong Li、魏潤喜Young Hy Uy、司徒麗珍Si Tu Li Zhen、林重平Chung Ping Lam）。由於五人小組的努力和廣大群眾的支持，張先生出謀劃策、出錢出力，捐出一對手錶和三封利是做獎品，購買食品，把家裡的咖啡壺、抽獎券和奶粉都無私的拿出來；李先生也積極參與，出錢出力，捐出兩封利是做獎品，還把家裡的咖啡和糖等都拿到會來，而且當天一早就來佈置會場、燒茶、泡咖啡、擺食品；林先生也捐出兩份獎品和氣球、書寫紅幅、佈置會場。大家團結一致，使準備工作順利完成。更令人鼓舞的是在開會前刻，阿芳和王太太主動送來了兩大盤她們自己烹飪的糕點，美觀可口，備受讚許。

十時許，住民開始入座，聯誼會在一片托拍氣球的熱身活動中拉開序幕，大會由張先生主持並宣佈開始，他首先致詞，闡明聯誼會的目的，其次介紹五人小組成員，並希望大家熱心參與、積極支持。接著由林先生講《十大健康食品排行榜》，李先生講《如何保護眼睛及其保健食療》，在助興節目中，有魔術表演、歌曲清唱、和講故事等，最後進行幸運抽獎，在一片歡樂聲中，大家一起拍集體相片紀念。聯誼會在依依不捨中結束。會後，Community Council President Jo Benefield說：她擔任本大廈主席四年多來，這次聯誼會活動是安排得最好的，有秩序、有趣味、有歡樂、有友誼！值得發揚光大。在此也希望聯誼會能夠帶給大家更多知識！更大歡樂！更深友誼！

said: "This event was one of our best yet. It was orderly, fun, joyous and friendly and is worth carrying forward. I hope that Tea Time will bring everyone more knowledge, greater joy and deeper friendship!"

Chung Ping Lam is a resident of Beacon Tower.

Tri-Court gets gardening grant from city

By HARRY OHMAN

President Tri-Court Resident Council

The City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods has awarded a grant of \$7,040 to the Tri-Court Resident Council for their garden renovation project.

Tri-Court has eight garden plots, where 14 residents grow flowers and vegetables.

Residents and visitors sometimes say that the area looks cluttered with tools and gardening supplies. The grant will help volunteers improve the area's appearance, starting with the installation of a tool shed and the attachment of white lattice to the chain link fence. Residents will also spread beauty bark around the garden plots and make other improvements.

Bill Svoboda, president of the Tri-Court Garden Club was instrumental in writing the grant application. He kept the residents focused on this project through several deadlines and meetings with Seattle Housing Authority management (Tri-Court Property Manager Frankie Johnson gave her full support). He also worked closely with Allynn Ruth at the Department of Neighborhoods.

Tri-Court Resident Council Secretary

Aubria Boynton also worked tirelessly through many drafts to get the application ready for submittal.

The award requires that Tri-Court residents match the grant with work and donations. The Seattle Housing Authority pledged \$500 for the project, and some residents who will be unable to participate also pledged money.

More than 10 Tri-Court residents have pledged to not only work on the project but to maintain the site in the future.

Awardees attended a recognition ceremony late last month which was hosted by Mayor Greg Nickels and Department of Neighborhoods Director Stella Chao. Forty-two other organizations also received awards, the most in any other award period.

The Department of Neighborhoods Small and Simple Neighborhood Matching Fund grants awards to groups that meet the fund's goal of promoting neighborhood involvement. Many of Tri-Court's neighbors as well as Gain The Highland, an association of Greenwood and Aurora residents have agreed to participate in a work party.

"I just wanted to beautify the place," said Tri-Court resident Valerie Vanbuskirk.

Juneteenth celebrated at Jefferson Terrace

By CLAIRE McDANIEL

Seattle Housing Authority

As Jefferson Terrace residents began to trickle in to the Elder Health Community Room last month, they were greeted by the smiling face of resident Michael Hamm and asked to sign in.

"I'm very involved in the Juneteenth celebration," Hamm said proudly. "I help coordinate by setting up the tables, decorating and whatever is necessary to do."

Hamm said he likes living at Jefferson Terrace because of the "family spirit - people helping each other and caring for each other and watching out for each other. Juneteenth is a chance to celebrate a fellowship. It's the end of slavery but it's an everybody celebration."

Though the Emancipation Proclamation was issued on September 22, 1862, with an

Look for more news in the cover section

On page 5 of The Voice's cover section you'll find news about SHA residents who've landed funding for neighborhood training and a Jackson Park student who won an award from the Mayor of Seattle.

That's the section titled "The Voice." Go there for more great stories!

effective date of January 1, 1863, it had little immediate effect on most slaves' day-to-day lives, particularly in Texas, which was almost entirely under Confederate control. Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, the day Union General Gordon Granger and



Michael Hamm

2,000 federal troops arrived on Galveston Island to take possession of the state and enforce the emancipation of its slaves. That day has since become known as Juneteenth, a name derived from the combination of the words June and nineteenth.

Former slaves in Galveston rejoiced in the streets. Juneteenth celebrations began in Texas the following year and are now celebrated through the country.

Since it is difficult for some residents of Jefferson Terrace to travel to one of the various Juneteenth celebrations around Seattle, resident Cory Russell carried on the tradition of coordinating Jefferson Terrace's own on-site get together. It included music, food, prizes and certificates of appreciation.

"This is my sixth year here. I love everybody," Russell said. "People are sick here, and I want them to be happy and come to the Juneteenth celebration and have fun. If they can't get out, we have people who bring them food. I'm happy because I get to help people."

HIGH POINT HERALD

NEWS ABOUT THE HIGH POINT COMMUNITY

Road closure to last through September

TRI-STATE CONSTRUCTION

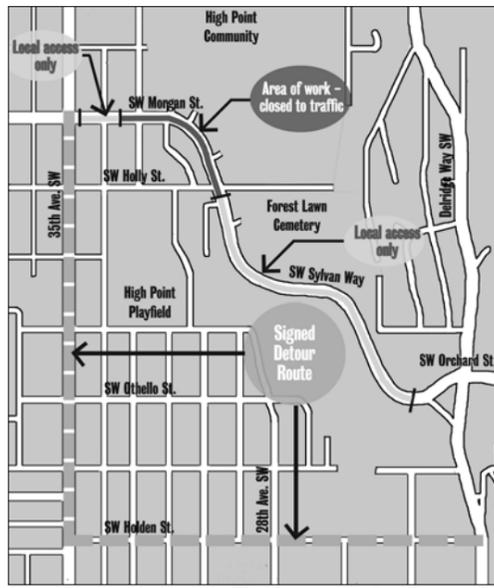
Last month a stretch of Southwest Morgan Street/Sylvan Way Southwest in West Seattle was closed in order to perform road and underground utility work in connection with the second phase of construction in High Point.

Work is expected to take about three months, with completion in mid- to late-September.

The street closure extends from 35th Avenue Southwest to Delridge Way Southwest. The Seattle Housing Authority's contractor, Tri-State Construction, is providing access to local residents and business patrons during this construction. No access will be permitted from just west of 32nd Avenue Southwest to just south of Southwest Holly Street.

Detour signs were posted in advance of the work and during the closure. Traffic is now detoured to 35th Avenue Southwest and Southwest Holden Street. Access to Forest Lawn Cemetery and Funeral Home has been maintained via Sylvan Way Southwest from Delridge Way Southwest.

Work hours are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays. The project has a construction information line at 206-935-4006 if community members have questions or concerns.



The map above shows the Sylvan/Morgan road closure and signed detour routes.

During the closure, crews are demolishing and rebuilding the existing street and installing sewer, storm, water, gas, electric, Qwest and Comcast utilities in preparation for new home construction.

Some construction noise is expected due to the demolition of concrete and the use of large earth-moving equipment.

For more information about the High Point project, visit <http://www.seattlehousingauthority.org/development/highpoint/highpoint.html>

High Point residents elect association trustees

By ANN LEVINE

Seattle Housing Authority

Election results for the High Point Neighborhood Association are in.

Between June 5 to June 14, 168 voters from 120 households in High Point cast their ballots to select five trustees.

The new trustees are Abdirahman Mohamed and Andrew Mead from voting group A and Liz Nguyen, Yon Noy and Steve Barham from voting group B. They will serve three-year terms.

Residents voted in two groups based on the location of their homes. From each voting group, a mix of renters and homeowners were elected. Voters in voting group A cast votes for two candidates, and voters in voting group B cast votes for three candidates. The five new trustees were selected from 16 total candidates.

Ninety-seven residents voted from voting group A, with 34 percent voting for Abdirahman Mohamed. In his biography included in the voters guide, Mohamed expressed that his goals are to help youth by creating new programs and teaching them to become better leaders. He wants to keep the High Point neighborhood safe and drug free. He also hopes to help community members better understand one another and work together.

Andrew Mead received 45 percent of the votes from group A. Mead has a background in organizational communication and intercultural studies. He and his wife moved to High Point to be in a diverse neighborhood. Mead has actively participated in the Neighborhood Association since its first meeting five months ago.

Seventy-one residents cast a ballot in voting group B, with 63 percent of the vot-

ers selecting Liz Nguyen. Nguyen is already an active volunteer within High Point. She is one of the coordinators of the Vietnamese Tea Group and a member of the walking club. She enjoys helping fellow residents to access neighborhood services.

Yon Noy received 58 percent of the votes from group B. Noy is an active leader in the High Point community. He is president of the Khmer Association, which he helped to create. Also, he serves on the Healthy Homes Community Action Team and participates in the walking club. He is committed to bringing diverse groups together, keeping our community healthy and safe and increasing pedestrian safety.

Forty-two percent of group B's voters selected Steve Barham. Barham began his involvement at High Point several years ago while working for Neighborhood House.

He worked with residents and service providers on environmental and community health projects for the Healthy Homes and Community program. He is looking forward to living and participating in the community.

The High Point Neighborhood Association was created to provide an opportunity for all High Point residents to come together to celebrate the community, plan neighborhood events and address common concerns.

Trustees serve as the Neighborhood Association's Board of Directors, overseeing its business, engaging residents in community activities, representing neighbors' concerns and allocating association funds.

The new trustees will meet with the three existing trustees for a mini-retreat this month, where they can get to know one another and discuss a vision for the Neighborhood Association.

Gardening

Continued from page 2

about \$14 per week.

You can subscribe now by filling out an application online at <http://www.seattlemarketgardens.org>. If you need more information you can contact Michelle Jones, Seattle Market Gardens' marketing manager at 206-723-0678 or by e-mail at michellej58@hotmail.com.

When you purchase a subscription, you get to see where and how your fresh, organic produce is grown. You also help to guarantee an income for local farmers. The majority of the income generated from subscriptions is divided among the farmers.

The program provides the farmers with an opportunity to practice their English skills with their customers, and the partnership helps the mostly immigrant farmers gain confidence and adjust to life in the United States, at the same time promoting community and healing for those who have experienced the stresses of war.

Produce may be picked up at any of the locations below:

High Point Market Garden

32nd Avenue Southwest and Southwest Juneau Street. On-site pick up on Wednesdays from 5 to 7 p.m. until October 17.

NewHolly Market Garden

42nd Avenue South and South Rockery Drive. On-Site pick up on Thursdays from 5 to 7 p.m. until October 18.

St. Andrews Episcopal Church

111 N.E. 80th St. Pick up on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to dusk until October 20.

St. Therese Catholic Church

3416 E. Marion St. Pick up on Sundays from 10 a.m. to noon until October 21.

Farmer spotlight: Hein Nguyen

By BUNLY YUN

Seattle P-Patch Garden Coordinator

Hien Nguyen was an officer in the South Vietnamese Army and worked with the U.S. Army in Saigon during the Vietnam War. He was captured and sent to a North Vietnamese prison near Hanoi for 13 years. He worked hard on the prison farm, planting beans, rice, potatoes and vegetables.

After his release, he returned to Saigon and in 1994 had a chance to move to the U.S. He came to Seattle and it became his new hometown.

He and his wife have been living at High Point for 12 years, and they enjoy the community very much. Nguyen speaks four languages: English, French, Chinese and Vietnamese.

He is very active in the High Point community, helping to build two community gardens and the High Point Market Garden and serving on the Community Action Team.

Nguyen has gardened for over 11 years, saying it allows him to be outdoors and stay healthy.

"I like the High Point Market Garden more than anything because I can work with others, meet with customers, and make extra money," he said.

You can usually find him there every morning and late afternoon during the gardening season. He likes to plant Chinese mustard greens, green beans, tomatoes, lettuces and garlic.

Park dedicated to longtime resident



PHOTO BY VIRGINIA FELTON

High Point resident Joyce Williams, honoree Judy Fay and Seattle Housing Authority Board of Commissioners Chair David Bley stand behind the boulder and nameplate that establishes Judith G. Fay Park as the name of High Point's newest park. The park sits at the corner of 32nd Avenue Southwest and Southwest Raymond Street. The dedication brought together about 150 High Point residents and friends of Fay last month. Fay lived at High Point for more than 25 years and served two terms as a SHA commissioner. Ron Oldham, from the Pacific Northwest chapter of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, presented an award to Fay and read a proclamation. Williams spoke about Fay's contributions to residents. The occasion also included the presentation of an award for High Point and a check for \$10,000 to SHA from the Rudy Bruner Foundation.

RAINIER VISTA NEWS

NEWS ABOUT THE RAINIER VISTA COMMUNITY

Backyard landscaping contest underway for renters



PHOTO BY STACY SCHWANDT

Rainier Vista resident Kawsa Ali and her son pick radishes from her vegetable garden. Ali said she may try to win the Rainier Vista backyard landscaping competition.

By STACY SCHWANDT
Voice editor

All renters living in Rainier Vista's townhomes are invited to compete in a backyard landscaping competition this month.

The competition will be judged on July 31 by Seattle Housing Authority's Impact Property Management and a group of Rainier Vista neighbors who don't have backyards.

Prizes will be awarded in four categories including the best backyard garden, the best kept backyard block, the best overall backyard/patio and the most creative backyard.

Prizes include gardening tools and gift certificates.

"One of the things that we're putting a high amount of priority on is curb appeal," said Seattle Housing Authority Senior Property Manager Dean Weitenhagen.

As a component of their leases, renters are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of their backyards, which are about 25 by 25 feet. Impact Property Management takes care of the front yards.

For those who overlook the responsibility, the Impact Property Management has been issuing "lawn check" tickets to urge them to take the responsibility seriously.

After that, Impact Property Management will go in and tidy up the backyard.

This results in a fee for homeowners, and if it happens too many times, steps are taken to inform the family that they are out of compliance with their lease, which could mean a notice of eviction.

But Weitenhagen said the goal is for it never to get to that stage.

"We're helping folks in a really positive way maintain compliance with their leases," he said.

Already, Weitenhagen has worked with the SHA community building office to organize two gardening workshops in conjunction with the City of Seattle's P-Patch program.

They've also distributed push lawn mowers and provided use and maintenance training to the 19 households who have grass backyards.

The remaining roughly 100 households have backyard beds covered with bark.

Rainier Vista resident Kawsa Ali has participated in all of the gardening workshops and looks forward to competing in this month's backyard landscaping competition.

"I didn't know how to make a garden or cultivate the flowers, I'm learning that all right now," Ali said through a translator.

Ali escaped from Somalia as a young girl when she was living with her parents, so she has never had a garden of her own.

When she first arrived in Seattle, she lived in the High Point public housing community and only had a grass yard to care for.

Now she has four raised beds in her backyard, one for vegetables and three for flowers.

"When I open my door, I like to see something myself with my eyes," she said. "I like to see something nice and comfortable."

Chavez received an award for her work as a part-time office assistant at the Department of Social and Health Services while pursuing her studies at Seattle Central.

She will continue for her second year at SCCC to earn her AAS degree in Social and Human Services and a certificate in Chemical Dependency.

All of these four young scholars are on their way to success in higher education.

The Higher Education Project will offer Dream Big Scholarships next year to youth living in SHA assisted housing, so the opportunity will be there for others to follow in the footsteps of this year's winners.

Former RV resident lands desired job

By VAN VO AND LARRY HILL
Seattle Housing Authority

Former Rainier Vista resident Berhan Yigzaw began her new duties as a janitor for Seattle Housing Authority last month.

Her journey to this position has been a winding one: Yigzaw worked in this same position until December 2005 when her situation required her to move to the Indianapolis, Indiana area.

Moving back to Seattle many months later, Yigzaw wished she could find a job exactly like her SHA janitor position but none were then available.

When a temporary janitor job became open at SHA, with help from Seattle Housing Authority's The Job Connection, Yigzaw applied, interviewed and began working, always in the hope that she could once again become a permanent employee as before.

Finally the exact opportunity came to Yigzaw as she interviewed for an open janitor position in late May. After waiting a couple of days, Yigzaw heard very welcome news: she was being offered the job! Yigzaw will be performing the exact job duties that she has been doing for some time in her temporary capacity but will be doing so with the addition of a comprehensive benefits program and as a member of Teamster's Union Local 117.

Yigzaw is a great asset to SHA. Her warm smile and superior work performance make her one of the most delightful individuals. Be sure to say "hi" to Yigzaw when you see her working in your neighborhood.

If you're interested in finding work, contact The Job Connection for help at 206-722-4010.



Berhan Yigzaw

Rainier Vista meets for traffic safety meeting



PHOTO BY SCOTT FREUTEL

Safety and parking issues hold RV residents' attention at the Neighborhood House Rainier Vista Center last month, as an overflow crowd gathered to discuss concerns about parking, speeding and pedestrian safety. Seattle Department of Transportation representative Julie Erickson told residents how they can go about requesting residential parking zones in their neighborhood. SDOT representative Mike Hendrix addressed questions about what can be done to slow neighborhood traffic, saying residents will first need to track traffic speeds and then request traffic-calming devices such as speed humps and speed-tracking radar reader boards. The Traffic Safety Committee will meet again at 7 p.m. on July 9 in the Rainier Vista Center.

Help finding construction jobs is available

By LARRY HILL AND VAN VO
Seattle Housing Authority

Central area resident Lamont King has been doing construction work for years. He has worked for major redevelopment contractors and subcontractors at sites ranging from Rainier Vista to Park Lake.

He has worked as an assistant plumber and general laborer, filling a variety of roles for his employers.

King has always looked forward to landing a position with the City of Seattle or King County that would be long term and that he could make a career out of.

With the help of Seattle Housing Authority's The Job Connection, he has been applying for such jobs as they open, interviewing when called, testing as necessary and has even secured a Commercial Driver's License.

Please see "Jobs" on page 6

Scholarships

Continued from page 2

enrolled in the Social and Human Services Program.

Chavez said she wants to work with at-risk youth as a mentor, teacher and community leader to show them that someone cares about them.

Chavez sets a strong example for her younger siblings, saying, "They see that my sister and I are getting a higher education so I will push them and guide them when they get to that point in life... We will keep education as a cycle in my family."

NEWHOLLY NOTES

NEWS ABOUT THE NEWHOLLY COMMUNITY

NewHolly Homeowners Association in transition

By VIRGINIA FELTON
Seattle Housing Authority

By the end of July, the NewHolly Homeowners Association will be governed exclusively by homeowners, who will then hold all of the seats on the board.

When the NewHolly community first started operating, the homeowners association board was made up of Seattle Housing Authority staff members who conducted business on behalf of the homeowners.

It is common practice in new developments that the developer gets the homeowners association started and then transitions out as the homes for sale in the new neighborhood are occupied by owners.

Currently, a mail-in election for seats on the homeowners' board is in progress.

The goal is to have the election completed and seat the homeowner elected representatives at their July 25 meeting. The first order of business for the newly-elected board members will be to elect officers from among themselves.

Since last summer, SHA staff has been working with members of the homeowners association on this transition. A number of committees have been formed and are successfully running.

One of the committees is a landscape committee charged with overseeing the contracts and the landscaping in the common areas and working to define community-wide standards.

Another committee is the architectural control committee, which will review requests made by homeowners to modify the outside of their units.

The neighborhood committees, one for each phase of the community, are meeting regularly to address issues that are of concern to that particular phase. The budget and finance committee is meeting to review the financial statements and begin budgeting for 2008.

The safety and transportation committee (a community-wide committee) is working with Joy Bryngelson and the City of Seattle on these issues.

This committee has had success in getting a traffic light installed on Othello and is now ready to work on traffic calming strategies throughout the site.

Committee members are also working with the city to get a resident parking designation for NewHolly streets before the Light Rail system begins operating in 2009.

In any transition such as this one, there are issues that need to be resolved between the developer and the homeowners.

Some of the issues in this transition include the replacement of the water submeters in Phase II and related shut off valve replacement, the turnover of all relevant architectural drawings and other documents by SHA to the association and the completion of the 2006 financial statement which will help to determine SHA's final financial contribution to the association.

Even though SHA will no longer be an official board member, the Housing Authority will continue to work closely with the homeowners association to address ongoing needs and issues as they arise.

Carol Wellenberger, SHA's association liaison, contributed to this article.

Traffic safety committee lands grant for signs

By CECELIA LINSLEY
Special to The Voice

In a ceremony at Beacon Hill Elementary School last month, the Department of Neighborhoods awarded a \$15,000 grant to the NewHolly Traffic Safety and Crime Prevention Committee.

The grant allows the committee to begin a community-wide process to talk and learn about traffic and pedestrian safety that will culminate in the design and installation of traffic safety signs throughout the three phases of the NewHolly community.

The signs will be written in multiple languages or will include pictures or symbols that are universal and thus understandable despite language barriers.

The Department of Neighborhood grants were specifically awarded for projects that rely upon building and receiving community support. Committee members are excited to have this opportunity to reach out to their neighbors and work together on this project.

The Traffic Safety and Crime Prevention Committee stays very busy. In addition to working on the grant, committee members are working with neighbors to monitor speeds through certain parts of NewHolly with the help of a radar gun on loan from the city's Department of Transportation. With

the data gathered during this speed watch, members hope to persuade the DOT of the need for traffic calming measures in our neighborhoods.

The committee meets regularly with DOT, Sound Transit and Seattle Housing Authority staff members about traffic safety as well as with NewHolly security staff and members of the Seattle Police Department about crime prevention.

They also work with neighborhood groups to facilitate BlockWatch trainings.

The committee meets every second Thursday of the month in the NewHolly Community Living Room from 6 to 7:30 p.m. All residents of NewHolly are welcome and encouraged to join. Please call ahead to 206-723-1725 if you will need an interpreter.

Cecelia Linsley is a NewHolly resident.

Jobs

Continued from page 5

A recent interview with King County's roads and maintenance department went very well — his research, practice interviewing and ability to accurately describe his experience and qualifications led to a full-time job as a laborer.

Information, ideas shared at Neighborhood Night



PHOTO BY STACY SCHWANDT

NewHolly residents chat with their neighbors and review the meeting agenda before the start of the NewHolly neighborhood night.

By STACY SCHWANDT
Voice editor

Brainstorming ways to spend NewHolly's \$5,000 community fund and sharing ideas for getting to know your neighbors were on the agenda at last month's NewHolly Neighborhood Night.

About 30 people attended the meeting, which is meant to be a time for neighbors to meet one another, find out about what's going on in the community and get involved.

The turnout was not as robust as planned, and Seattle Housing Authority Community Builder Joy Bryngelson said there were some problems with the flyer distribution.

"I hope that everyone who came listens very hard, and takes all of this information back to their neighbors," she told those in attendance, and invited them to get in touch with her with ideas on how to get the word out to neighbors about community events.

Nevertheless good information was shared, with reports provided from each of the neighborhood committees, including Youth and Parents, Parks and Clean-up, Crime Prevention and Traffic Safety, Welcome Wagon, Council Organizing and Multicultural Communications.

After the Multicultural Communications Committee presented, emcee and NewHolly resident Daphne Schneider suggested that the group brainstorm some ideas for celebrating the many cultures of NewHolly.

Ideas included organizing cultural workshops, movie nights, preparing written material about other cultures and organizing a series of meals with a cultural theme.

"We can eat our way around the world," Schneider said.

Ideas on how to spend the annual community fund included spreading informa-

This is exactly the type of position King has been hoping for for a long time: a career-track job that he will be able to count on for a long time.

Do you live near Rainier Vista, NewHolly, High Point, Yesler Terrace or other Seattle Housing Authority site?

Are you a construction trades professional out of work? Are you thinking about your background in construction trades as a long-term career?

If so, The Job Connection can help you find a good job. Call 206-722-4010, ext. 6 or 206-484-6882 and ask for Larry for further details.

tion about the problem of litter in the neighborhood, electing a NewHolly citizen of the year and using the money to pay for a prize, purchasing play equipment for the smaller children in Phase III and organizing quarterly family nights that include traditional dance, food and other entertainment.

Bryngelson invited those with ideas to attend a meeting of the committee that seems most closely aligned with their idea. The committees can make project proposals to the overall community.

"Five thousand dollars is a lot of money, so we should be able to take on a good number of projects," she said.

For more information on when the committees meet, call Bryngelson at 206-723-1725 or go to <http://www.newholly.org>.

Community notes

Are you ready?

Seattle University Nursing Students were in the NewHolly community in late May providing educational information regarding emergency and disaster preparedness.

Stop by Seattle Housing Authority Community Builder Joy Bryngelson's office in the NewHolly family center and receive a free packet of information about what you and your family will need to be prepared for three days. Come see what it takes to be prepared!

Pitch in to clean-up Shaffer Park

A parent and adult clean-up will take place on Thursday, July 19 from 5 to 7 p.m. The basic aim is to prepare the area and do some electric sanding of the wooden play structure.

A youth and family clean-up will take place on Saturday, July 21 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The idea is to hand out plenty of squares of sand paper and cleaning supplies to park participants 3 years and older. The more little hands cleaning up the park, the more little people to feel proud of their space. After cleaning we'll celebrate with volunteer recognition and a community picnic and pizza party.

After the clean-up, the Housing Authority will stain the wooden play equipment a dark shade to discourage graffiti and other vandalism.

YESLER HAPPENINGS

NEWS ABOUT THE YESLER TERRACE COMMUNITY

Big crowd enjoys Juneteenth party



Face painting was a big hit.

PHOTO BY CYNTHIA CLOUSER



Youth also enjoyed blowing bubbles on the warm afternoon

PHOTO BY CYNTHIA CLOUSER

By CYNTHIA CLOUSER
Special to *The Voice*

The Juneteenth event at Yesler Terrace was a wonderful collaboration with many different cultures coming together.

The guest speaker was Al Poole from the City of Seattle. He spoke on the origin of Juneteenth or "Freedom Day." It was in Texas on June 19, 1865 that citizens learned slavery had been abolished. Since then, people all over the U.S. have been celebrating with events focusing on the accomplishments of African-Americans and teaching tolerance and respect for all.

At our celebration, Yesler Terrace community members enjoyed a variety of ethnic foods and entertainment, including Eritrean music and traditional dance.

A group performed Capoeira, a form of Brazilian martial arts and dance. Mary

Nguyen, Winta Yohannes and Tashe Williams did a very good hip-hop dance, and to top it all off Yohanna Gebregiorgis, a young lady with a sweet voice, belted out an amazing song. It was wonderful to hear.

Children had fun with bubbles and getting their faces painted. A few people found books at the book exchange.

"It was a wonderful way for the community to come together as a whole," said Erica Merritt, the Yesler Terrace site coordinator for the Nature Consortium.

A good time was had by all. The food was delicious and the information booths offered excellent resources.

One Yesler resident, Hibo, said "It was a fun and a learning experience."

Two information booths were new this year, including the Dahn Foundation whose members will be volunteering at the Yesler Community Center this summer, teaching

yoga to the summer camp youth and a martial arts class for the teens ages 12 and up.

The second new booth was about Working Wheels, a program of Solid Ground (formerly the Fremont Public Association) which helps people get low-interest loans to purchase a car. Call 206-694-6833 for more information on Working Wheels.

Our Community Police Officer Shelton Robinson was one of the handful of individuals who won an Alligator Award from the Yesler Terrace Community Council.

"I never expected this for just doing my job," he said, though all agreed that the honor was much deserved, and his work is greatly appreciated.

Many thanks go to Judi Carter for heading up a great event. I know we're all looking forward to next year's celebration!

Cynthia Clouser is a Yesler Terrace resident.

Notes from the manager

By JUDI CARTER
Senior Property Manager

Wasn't Juneteenth the best? It was so good to see people come together and have a wonderful time. Mary Nguyen, Winta Yohannes and Tashe Williams can really dance! And wasn't Yohanna Gebregiorgis brave to get up there and sing in front of all of those people all by herself!

Long hours of practicing with Erica Merritt from the Nature Consortium sure paid off. Great job ladies!

The children have been out of school for a couple of weeks now, and already some are getting bored and eating so much that it is hard to keep food in the house.

I hope that you are sending them down to the Yesler Community Center, 917 E. Yesler Way, for the City's free summer sack lunches, served at noon every weekday. It will certainly help your food budget.

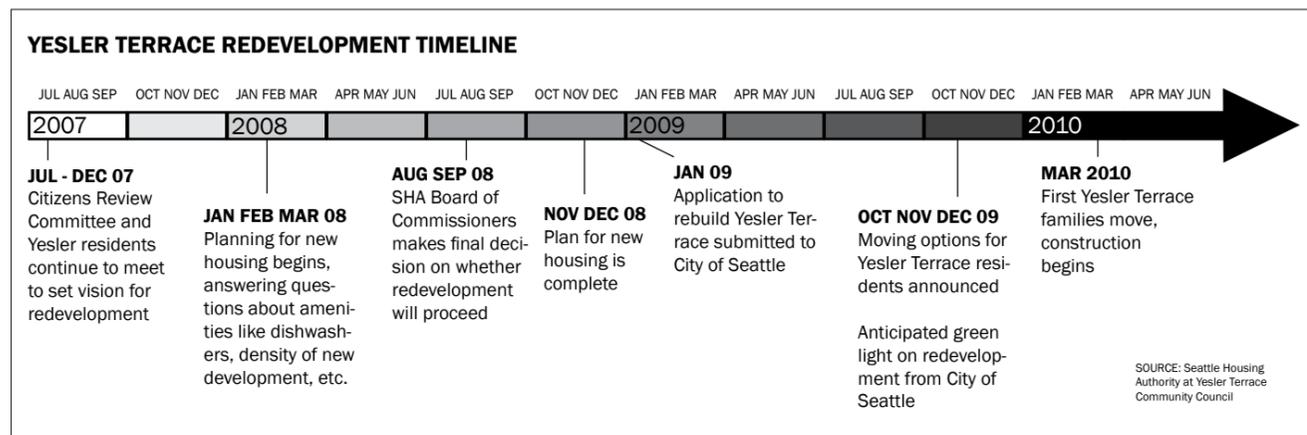
If you are new to the community, be sure to check out the center while the children are having lunch. There is a computer lab, a weight and exercise room, a full-sized gym, an art room, a huge multipurpose room and a child care suite. The staff members are great, and the space is impressive.

By the time you are reading this article, the Fourth of July will probably have passed. I am hoping that you did not buy any fireworks, or if you did, that you did not set them off in Yesler Terrace. Fireworks were made illegal in the City of Seattle several years ago because of the damage and injuries they have caused.

If you have any fireworks, please do not set them off here, and do not allow your children to use them in Yesler Terrace.

Details on redevelopment shared

Residents to get a written guarantee of right to return to new Yesler



By STACY SCHWANDT
Voice editor

Seattle Housing Authority Executive Director Tom Tierney and other SHA officials met with residents several times last month, providing information about Yesler Terrace redevelopment and its timetable.

Senior Development Manager Judith Kilgore said that if redevelopment goes forward, the soonest any Yesler Terrace resident would have to move to make way for construction would be March 2010.

All residents who are currently living in Yesler Terrace will be invited to move back to the redeveloped community unless they do something in the future that makes them ineligible for public housing,

Tierney said.

Information about where Yesler Terrace residents will be moving to won't likely be available until the last quarter of 2009, Kilgore said, adding that SHA may be able to rebuild the community in stages so that residents can move right into their new apartments.

Tierney said it is his intention to provide tenants with a piece of paper guaranteeing their right to return to the new community, perhaps during the relocation process.

The Yesler Community Council has voted to retain an attorney to ensure that residents get this written guarantee.

Discussions about what a new community would look like will start in early 2008 and last all year, Tierney said. This process

will determine whether there will be high-rise apartment buildings and parks, what type of apartments will be available and what amenities they will have inside.

Residents will be invited to take part in these conversations.

Residents at the Yesler Terrace Community Council meeting asked Tierney whether single people would have to live in studio apartments in the new community, and if the new units would have washers and dryers. Tierney pointed out that in all of the newly-redeveloped SHA communities, SHA's rental units have at least one bedroom with washers and dryers.

In-home day care providers will be invited to discuss their needs in a redeveloped community at a meeting this month.

Reader's viewpoint

By KRISTIN O'DONNELL
Yesler Community Council president

The Community Council got some answers about the future of Yesler Terrace last month, but we still have questions.

If the City Council approves redevelopment without a plan for replacement housing, how will that guarantee replacement? Exactly what does "eligible to return" mean? If a current resident family chooses not to return to Yesler Terrace, will their unit be replaced for a family on the waiting list?

We are looking for a lawyer to help us get our questions answered, and to get the Housing Authority's promises in writing.

We heard from SHA Executive Director Tom Tierney that the Citizen Review Committee would have time for public comment on its June agenda — the agenda has an item for "discussion of accepting public comment," which is not the same thing!

The next council meeting (watch for the flyer for date and time) will focus on Yesler Terrace now. Do plans for tearing it down mean less maintenance? Are gangs making our community a dangerous place? What's being done to fix what's broken?

The nominating committee is looking for people to be a part of council leadership. Suggestion boxes are in the management office and at Neighborhood House.

