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The Voice

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Articles translated
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The newspaper of Neighborhood House — visit our website at www.voicenewspaper.org

Transit Riders Union rallies support for public transportation

By TYLER ROUSH
The Voice editor

Freedom of transportation and the ease with which we get from place to place is a privilege that many take for granted. For those who rely on public transportation — whether by choice or because it is their sole option — the question of how one gets around can be more complicated.

Now in its first year as a membership organization, the Transit Riders Union (TRU) is a Seattle-based collective of transit riders and supporters advocating for investment in mass transit.

Some 50 members strong, the group is comprised of people from many different backgrounds and with varying income levels, united by public transit.

From state and local funding of public transit to the rights and needs of its users, the group's sole focus is on how to make transit ridership simpler, less expensive and more accessible for all.

"We are as strong as our numbers, and we're all-volunteer," said Katie Wilson, a founding member of the TRU. "We need people who have the time and the energy to put into planning and running campaigns."

TRU member Sam Smith brings a unique perspective to the group. A frequent Metro rider, the Seattleite is also a Metro driver.

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Firwood Circle tutoring students enjoy a snow day



PHOTO BY KIAN FLYNN

Mohamed Sheikh, a seventh-grade student in Neighborhood House's tutoring program at Firwood Circle, gets some big air while sledding at Hyak Sno-Park near the Snoqualmie summit. A group of tutoring students from KCHA's Firwood Circle community took a field trip to the park during last month's President's Day weekend.



PHOTO BY CLARE KIM

Demonstrators gathered on the steps of the Capitol Building in Olympia Feb. 14 to participate in the annual Refugee and Immigrant Legislative Day.

Legislative day gives voice to immigrant and refugee community

By CLARE KIM
The Voice Intern

A succession of buses unloaded the hundreds of refugees, immigrants, and advocates in front of the Washington State Capitol early Thursday morning in Olympia for the Seventh Annual Refugee and Immigrant Legislative Day Feb. 14.

For the many refugee and immigrant communities along with their advocates, the annual rally brings the opportunity to voice concerns and address issues to state legislatures regarding policies and programs surrounding immigration reform. Participants also have the opportunity for a brief face-to-face meeting with their leg-

islators, allowing them to air their concerns directly to their representatives in Olympia.

Members of the Neighborhood House Be Active Together (BAT) team helped organize a group of volunteers and advocates to attend the lobbying day. Project Director Denise Sharify said the annual lobby day effort helps engage the diverse community of BAT participants.

"Civic engagement is critically important, particularly among groups who may experience obstacles on their path to self-sufficiency," Sharify said. "Our hope with BAT is that all of our families become active in their daily lives and in their com-

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Health Notes

A column devoted to your well-being

Eating right for a healthy weight

BY ACADEMY OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

Reaching and maintaining a healthier weight contributes to your overall health and well-being. Losing even a few pounds or preventing further weight gain has health benefits.

Are you ready to make changes in your lifestyle and move toward a healthier weight? Here are some tips to get you started.

Start with a plan for lifelong health. Focus on the big picture — achieving overall good health — not just short-term weight loss.

Set healthy, realistic goals. You are more likely to succeed in reaching realistic goals when you make changes step-by-step. Start with one or two specific, small changes at a time. Track your progress by keeping a food and activity log.

Eat at least three meals a day and plan your meals ahead of time. Whether you're eating at home, packing a lunch or eating out, an overall eating plan for the day will help keep you on track.

Balance your plate with a variety of foods. Half your plate should be filled with fruits and vegetables, about one fourth with lean meat, poultry or fish, and one fourth with grains. To round out your meal, add fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt or cheese.

Start your meal with low calorie foods like fruits, vegetables and salads. These foods are packed with nutrients your body needs.

Watch portion sizes to manage your calorie intake. Eat smaller portions of

protein (meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans) and grains (bread, rice, pasta).

Focus on your food. Pick one place to sit down and eat at home. Eating while doing other things may lead to eating more than you think. Also, switching from a large plate to a smaller one may help you feel satisfied with reduced portions.

Know when you've had enough to eat. Quit before you feel full or stuffed. It takes about 20 minutes for your brain to get the message that your body is getting food. When your brain gets this message, you stop feeling hungry. So, fast eaters — slow down and give your brain a chance to get the word.

Get plenty of fiber from fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains. Fiber can help you feel full longer and lower your risk for heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

Snack smart. Include snacks as part of your daily calorie allowance and limit portions to one serving.

Plan for nutritious snacks to prevent between-meal hunger. Keep portable, healthy snacks in your desk, backpack or car.

Find your balance between food and physical activity. Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness — plus, it helps control body weight, promotes a feeling of well-being and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.

Pick activities you like and do each for at least 10 minutes at a time. Aim for a total of 2 hours and 30 minutes or more each week of moderate activity, such as brisk walking. If you are currently inactive, check with your doctor concerning increased physical activity.

Financial Fitness Day offers free money management help

Just about everyone could use a little extra help when it comes to managing their money. Mark your calendars for the third annual Financial Fitness Day to get access to resources to help you better manage your finances.

The Financial Fitness Day is from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Saturday, March 9 at the Rainier Community Center, 4600 38th Ave. S., in Seattle. Don't miss this unique event that offers one-on-one help for many financial issues all in one location — brought to you by the City of Seattle and the Seattle-King County Asset Building Collaborative.

People who attend Financial Fitness Day will receive help filing their tax returns; printing and reviewing free credit reports; opening bank accounts; creating household budgets; developing plans to get out of debt; understanding options to foreclosure, applying for public benefits such as child care, food stamps, and utility assistance; learning to write a resume or apply for a job online; starting or growing a business; and shredding confidential documents.

All of these services are completely free. Free workshops throughout the day will cover credit reports; homeownership; dealing with debt collectors; money management, job readiness and employment resources; and planning for retirement.

Neighborhood House will be one of many participating agencies at the event, and will offer practical tips for budgeting to visitors.

"The success of last year's Financial Fitness Day demonstrated that there is a continuing need for access to high-quality financial advice. This is an amazing opportunity for our community members to receive a tremendous array of free services designed to help people understand, man-

age, and improve their financial situations," said Diana Stone, Director of the Seattle King-County Asset Building Collaborative. "We're offering people hands-on opportunities with experts from over 40 participating agencies to save money and make plans to help them reach realistic financial goals."

Last year, Daniel, a small business owner from Bellevue attended Financial Fitness Day and said he won't miss it again: "I have gained incredible insight on how to handle my family's finances, advice and strategies for the businesses I own, suggestions on paying for my children's college education, how to build my credit score in a reasonable manner, and several ways to increase my net worth. The opportunity to attend these events has been instrumental to me and my family, and I strongly recommend Financial Fitness Day to anyone looking for financial security and peace of mind."

Another participant, Barbara from Seattle, explained, "I was able to see how I can transition from homelessness onto my own two feet and start building a future. I met with a financial planner, a lawyer, and someone from the Entrepreneurial Law Clinic. I got referrals for help with debt, credit, and financial management."

"We are proud of the way that these organizations have united in common cause to provide access to financial education and services", said Mayor Mike McGinn. "When we help others succeed, we make our community stronger."

For more information or to register, visit www.skccabc.org/FinancialFitnessDay or call 888-864-8549. Those who require special accommodations, language interpretation or child care are particularly encouraged to RSVP.

One Night Count shows 5 percent increase in area's unsheltered homeless

BY VOICE STAFF

Each year the numbers are striking, as they represent the continuous issue of homelessness in Seattle and King County. One Night Count strives to bring awareness, public engagement, and action around the issue on homelessness with its primary purpose to document the number of people lacking basic shelter throughout the streets of Seattle and King County on a given night. The annual street count is organized by the Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness (SKCCH) with support from numerous state and local partners and volunteers.

Over 800 volunteers assisted with the early morning count on Friday, Jan 25. This year's count revealed 2,736 men, women, and children who were without shelter, a 5 percent increase in the number

of homeless in comparison to last year's total of 2,594. While the majority of unsheltered homeless were found in Seattle (1,989), the Eastside (197), Federal Way (118), and North End (106) also showed a substantial amount of homeless without shelter.

"The One Night Count is a humbling experience," said Coalition Executive Director Alison Eisinger. "This morning we are especially reminded that everyone should have a place to call home. The Count is a call to action each January — the beginning of a full year of education and action for all of us who care about this crisis."

The Voice Intern Clare Kim assembled this report from materials provided by the Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness.

Neighborhood House offers free citizenship classes

BY NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE STAFF

If you're looking for resources and assistance to become a U.S. citizen, Neighborhood House offers a series of services that you can access for free.

The agency offers free ESL classes, Citizenship courses, employment counseling and other services to low-income residents of King County. The Neighborhood House ESL and Citizenship programs run 8-week cycles and are offered throughout the year. The classes are 2 – 3 hours per meeting, two sessions per week (for example, Monday and Wednesday).

Eligible clients are legal, permanent, low-income residents of the United States. Enrollment is open and on-going while the group studies American history, naturalization questions and other components of the citizenship exam. There are classes at three sites with low and advance levels: Birch Creek in Kent, Wiley in White Center, and High Point in West Seattle. The course offers practice in writing, reading and mock interviews. Case managers offer free help with N-400 applications and provide fee and medical waivers.

*Documents required for enrollment include a Green Card, Social Security Card, Driver's License, DSHS letter and/or low income-verification.

Read on to find the site nearest you and begin your pathway to citizenship with Neighborhood House.

Birch Creek Center in Kent

3111 SE 274th St.
253-277-1667

Class schedule is 1 – 4 p.m. (beginning level), 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. (advanced level), Mondays and Wednesdays.

Languages spoken on site include Spanish, French, Somali, Vietnamese, Burmese, Russian and Ukrainian.

For more information, contact instructor Rechelle Schimke at rechelles@nhwa.org or 206-446-1097.

Wiley Center at Greenbridge/White Center

9800 Eighth Ave. SW
206-461-4554

Class schedule is noon – 2 p.m. (advanced level), 2 – 5 p.m. (beginning level and tutoring), Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Languages spoken on site include Spanish, French, Somali, Vietnamese, Burmese, Russian, Ukrainian and Khmer.

For more information, contact instructor Rechelle Schimke at rechelles@nhwa.org or 206-446-1097.

High Point Center in West Seattle

6400 Sylvan Way SW
206-588-4900

Class schedule is 12:30 – 2:30 p.m. (beginning level), 2:45 – 5:45 p.m. (advanced level), Mondays and Thursdays.

Languages spoken on site include Spanish, French, Somali, Vietnamese, Burmese, Russian and Ukrainian.

For more information, contact instructor Julia Kevon at juliak@nhwa.org or 206-588-4900, Ext. 615.

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

Be safe

Seattle police offer new crime prevention tools

By KELLY MCKINNEY
Seattle Neighborhood Group

The Seattle Police Department (SPD) has developed some new tools for tracking and reporting crime in your neighborhood.

It is now possible to go to the Seattle Police Department's website and see whether or not crime has increased citywide or by police beats on a month-by-month basis. It is also possible to look at crime statistics going all the way back to January of 1996.

The Seattle Police Department also has crime maps you can look at that show when and where an incident occurred. Additionally, SPD also provides brief police reports in PDF format.

Some people may not find statistics interesting, but if you want to research whether crime is really going up in your neighborhood, the Police Department's website can be a useful resource. If you are interested in using this resource, the web address is www.seattle.gov/police/

crime/default.htm

You will need to set up an account with the Seattle Police Department in order to get the police reports and to access some information.

You can also report some crimes online. The types of crimes you can report online are limited and include property destruction, identity theft, car prowls, theft of auto accessories and narcotics activity.

According to the Seattle Police Department's Community Online reporting website, the following criteria must be met:

The incident must not be an emergency. If it is an emergency, call 9-1-1.

The incident must occur within the Seattle City Limits

There are no known suspects. If a crime occurs and you know who did it, call 9-1-1.

Your web browser needs to be set up to use the SPD online reporting form application. You can report crimes online at www.seattle.gov/police/report/default.htm.

Transit

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"The ability to get from Point A to Point B is something that should not have to be an impediment for somebody to get their vital needs met. ... And for somebody who makes enough money, it isn't — you have a car or a transit pass, and you don't think about it — it's part of your expenses, and it's manageable or at least semi-manageable," Smith said.

Not so if you're on a fixed income or have little or no income.

"Suddenly this bus fare ... is an impediment, and you have to make choices — I can only afford one trip today, am I going to get food for my family, or am I going to go to my job," Smith said. "In a society that takes care of its citizens, that shouldn't have to be a choice people make, it should be a given right."

Sue Hodes, an instructor at Bellevue College, was motivated to take public transit after Washington state imposed a toll on the 520 floating bridge. Between the added expense of commuting over 520 and the heavier traffic on I-90, Hodes opted to leave her car in the garage.

She rides the bus to work about four days a week. But trying to go without the car has led to challenges, she said.

"From my middle-class perspective, it's so important to be able to get around. I have less stress not driving, and as I got more involved in (using the bus), I realized how hard it is," Hodes said.

After joining the TRU, she came to realize that for many low-income people, taking a car isn't even an option — public transit is their primary means of transportation. So why can't it be more accessible?

"We need this to equalize opportunity in our communities, so that all people can get to where they need to go," Hodes said.

And with carbon emissions, including from passenger cars, contributing to climate change, cleaner modes of transportation are a benefit to all.

"With global warming, it's good for upper-class people, middle-class people, poor people — it's a benefit for all," she said.

The Transit Riders Union was born out of the fight in the summer of 2011 to preserve Metro service. At the time, the agency faced a \$60 million budget

shortfall. With proposed service cuts of 17 percent to close the gap, the public rallied support for Metro at a series of public hearing held by the King County Council.

Responding in part to the outcry of support, the council ultimately passed a two-year, \$20 car tab fee, which closed much of the funding gap and curtailed service cuts of up to 17 percent. At the same time, the Ride Free Area in downtown Seattle was eliminated, which had been a major benefit to low-income riders traversing the downtown corridor.

Given the urgency of the Metro funding situation in 2011, TRU founding member Katie Wilson and a small cadre of supporters organized the TRU, which was officially formed as a membership organization in June 2012.

Among their major goals is a campaign for Metro to establish a fare for low-income riders. (Currently, Metro offers discounted fares for youth, seniors and persons with disabilities, but not for income-eligible riders.)

At \$2.50 for a single trip during peak hours or \$3 for a two-zone trip, Smith said current Metro fares are simply too high for many riders. Some of his friends choose to drive to work simply because a roundtrip fare of \$5 to \$6 is too expensive.

"From an environmental standpoint, the idea that somebody would choose to drive because it is cheaper, is a failure of the system," Smith said. "If taking public transit can't be more convenient, it should at least be more affordable."

And with the \$20 car tab fee set to expire next year and uncertainty looming about Metro's upcoming budget, the organizing power of the TRU and other transit advocacy groups might soon be needed again.

One thing seems certain, according to Hodes — when the debate over Metro funding is taken up once again, the TRU's voice will be as loud as the size of its membership.

"There's strength in community numbers," she said. "It's our one planet, and the more people that join us the better it will be for all."

To contact the Transit Riders Union or to become a member, visit www.transitriders.org, email contact@transitriders.org or call 206-651-4282.



PHOTO BY CLARE KIM

Gov. Jay Inslee (right center) greets one of the hundreds of participants in the annual Refugee and Immigrant Legislative Day Feb. 14.

Legislative Day

Continued on Page 1

munities."

The Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA) organized the legislative in 2007 to bring greater awareness of issues affecting refugee and immigrant communities. They are joined in Olympia each year by partner organizations and community members who wish to gather to advocate for the community and their needs.

Passionate faces filled the steps of the



PHOTO BY CLARE KIM

Neighborhood House volunteer ESL instructor Alex Mitu (center) delivered a short speech during the rally.

Capitol building as the congregation awaited the morning's rally. ESL students from South Seattle Community College opened the rally as they sang "America the Beautiful."

State senators Bob Hasegawa and Paull Shin attended the event, along with representatives Cyrus Habib, Tina Orwall, Ross Hunter and Sharon Tomiko-Santos. Each legislator thanked the participants for their presence, greeting the advocates with encouraging words and smiles.

An open mic was made available as the crowd awaited the arrival of Governor Jay Inslee. Neighborhood House volunteer ESL instructor Alex Mitu stepped forward to give a brief speech as he took the opportunity to share his personal experience on immigration and language learning.

The crowd gave Inslee an enthusiastic reception as he arrived on the Capitol steps, and many among the throng gathered around him in hopes of getting a picture with the governor.

After Inslee spoke, Vietnamese and Burmese performers closed the ceremony with a celebratory dance.

Get free help with your taxes

The United Way of King County's Free Tax Prep Campaign is here! Now through April 15, you can receive free tax help through certified tax professionals, as well as assistance with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), applying for food stamps, SNAP, utility assistance, children's healthcare, pulling your credit report, and setting up a credit union account.

If you (or your household) make less than \$51,000 per year, you are eligible for this free service. You don't need an appointment

to receive help with your taxes. Sites are run on a drop-in basis and therefore will have limited capacity and can get very crowded.

This free tax service is held at various locations across Seattle and King County and is available in multiple languages. To find the location nearest you, visit www.uwkc.org and search "Tax" or text "TAX" and your five digit zip code (for example: "TAX 98104") to 313131 to learn which site is nearest to you.

A full list of tax prep sites is also included in the Feb. 2013 edition of The Voice.

Do you qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit?

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a refundable federal income tax credit for low- to moderate-income working individuals and families.

When your EITC exceeds the amount of taxes you owe, qualifying individuals and families will receive a tax refund.

To qualify for EITC, you (and your spouse, if married and filing a joint return) must meet all of the following rules:

- You must have a valid Social Security Number
- You must have earned income from employment, self-employment or another source
- If married, you cannot use the married,

filing separate filing status

- You must be a U.S. citizen or resident alien all year, or a nonresident alien married to a U.S. citizen or resident alien, and choose to file a joint return and be treated as a resident alien

- You cannot be the qualifying child of another person
- You cannot file Form 2555 or 2555-EZ (related to foreign earned income)

You must also meet income eligibility guidelines, available at www.irs.gov/eitc.

If you qualify, you may be eligible to receive up to \$5,891 in tax credits for 2012. The volunteer tax preparers at the United Way can assist you in filing for the EITC. To learn more about the free tax preparation campaign, see the article above.

Police, RAC members discuss safer communities at February forum

By TYLER ROUSH
The Voice editor

How to create safer communities was on the minds of those who attended the Resident Action Council's latest forum on Feb. 13. Police officers from the South and North Precincts were guests at the forum, there to answer questions about police work and enforcement from the large crowd.

Sgt. Ann Martin, who oversees the South Precinct's Community Police Team, and Officer Rob Howard, the Seattle Housing Authority Liaison, shared the mic to respond to questions, which ranged from how to deal with harassing or threatening behavior from neighbors to one's confidentiality when reporting a crime.

The subject of harassing or malicious behavior was a major topic of discussion among attendees, many of whom related stories of neighbors or community members exhibiting threatening behavior. In many cases, mental illness was thought to be a contributing factor. Participants expressed frustration that they felt too little was being done to respond to such incidents.

The officers acknowledged that it's difficult to prosecute individuals in many of these cases, and that signs of mental illness alone do not warrant prosecution.

The burden of proof lies with the prosecution, and some accusations of criminal behavior are more difficult to prove than others, Howard noted.

"We start from that position of freedom," he said. "For the government to take somebody's freedom requires a burden of proof."

That decision is based on criminal behavior that can be proved, not on someone's mental state.

Michelle Chen, who attended the forum as a representative from the Seattle Housing Authority, said the agency's most effective action for protecting residents from harassment is through enforcement of the lease.

But that presents a Catch-22, said Dennis Bejin. The housing authority's mission is to



PHOTO BY TYLER ROUSH

Sgt. Ann Martin, who oversees the South Precinct's Community Police Team, speaks to Resident Action Council members during the group's Feb. 13 safety forum.

house people, not to create more homeless.

"There's pressure on (Seattle Housing Authority) not to throw people out on the street," Bejin said. "Until our society decides that matters like homelessness and poverty are worth addressing, we're not going to have a lot of change."

There are systemic issues related to mental illness and housing in the United States, and they won't be corrected overnight. But in the meantime, Martin encouraged residents to continue to report criminal or malicious behavior to the police. She also cleared up a misconception at the meeting that criminal behavior by a mentally ill person falls outside of the jurisdiction of the police, and instead rests with the county's mental health court.

That's not the case, Martin said. Depending on the circumstances, the case may be referred to mental health court. Police are still obligated to respond to the incident.

"There's still a duty for police to respond, document and make a report," Martin said.

A forum participant explained that a 911 dispatcher refused to take her call when she

tried to make a report involving a repeat offender who was known to be mentally ill. Martin explained that the dispatcher was wrong to do so. She advised anyone making a call to 911 to write down the dispatcher's ID number, usually given at the beginning of the call, so that any communication problems can be recorded and corrected through training.

Aside from that, she encouraged people to continue to call 911 to report crimes.

Regarding reporting drug activity, Howard explained that callers can choose to remain completely anonymous, or can ask to have their identity released only to the responding officers, who can contact them discretely to collect a statement.

"We're sensitive to these types of calls, and we don't want any kind of retaliation," Howard said.

Ultimately, personal safety is not just something that all are interested in, but a right that all should enjoy.

Matthew Anderson, president of the University House Resident Council, quoted President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in as-

Help Choose RAC's Leaders!

By JIM BUSH

Resident Action Council

That's right...it is time for your Resident Action Council to choose who will lead this dynamic, resident-driven organization for the next year — and we need your help.

How can you help us?

That's an easy question to answer. You can start thinking of people who you think would be good resident leaders right now. These people can live in your own community or in any community owned and operated by Seattle Housing. We will be accepting nominations between March and May of this year, with elections taking place in June to select our Board of Directors and Officers; no more than two people from a single community can be elected a RAC officer.

To be considered for one of these positions, potential candidates must be on a lease for an apartment in one of the communities owned and operated by Seattle Housing and have attended at least one Membership Meeting since last June (we'd prefer people to have attended at least two, to show that they are interested in being a part of this organization).

How can candidates be nominated?

That information is still being developed at this time, so we'll be providing that information soon. We're just letting you know the process will be starting next month, so people can start thinking about who they think would be good leaders for this organization. For more information, contact RAC at 206-322-1297.

serting that Seattle Housing residents, like everyone else, have the basic right to live free from fear.

"We do deserve that basic freedom for ourselves," Anderson said.

Celebrating those who "Dream Big"



PHOTO BY WINNIE SPERRY

Members of the Higher Education Project treated the 2012-13 recipients of Seattle Housing Authority's Dream Big Scholarship to a lunch in their honor. Standing at the far left and far right are Ngoc Nguyen and Andy Tang, respectively, previous Dream Big recipients. Between them are 2012-13 recipients (left to right) Hawi Ibrahim, Tran Nguyen and Hamda Yusuf. Seated are 2012-13 awardees Soria Ton and Becky Phan.

Seattle Housing successfully wraps up three-week registration for Section 8 waitlist lottery

By SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY STAFF

Seattle Housing Authority recently held a three-week registration for the chance to be placed on a newly created Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) waiting list. From Feb. 4 through Feb. 22, interested households were encouraged to sign up using an online registration form. Out of the 24,000 registrations the agency received during that three-week period, 2,000 households will be placed on the new waitlist at random using a computerized lottery process.

Registered households will be notified by letter via the U.S. mail no later than the end of March. The letter will indicate whether or not their household was selected at random to be placed on the waitlist.

This was the first time Seattle Housing has used an online-only registration system to populate the waiting list, which has resulted in higher registration numbers than in years past. To accommodate individuals who did not have readily available internet access, the agency compiled a list of nearly

100 internet-ready, computer-equipped locations throughout the region where people were welcome to sign up for the lottery. The agency also provided a Waitlist Hotline phone number registrants could call if they

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Content guide

Don't see your neighborhood section? Consult the guide below to find the logos that correspond to your community.

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-  **NewHolly Notes**
-  **Rainier Vista News**
-  **Yesler Happenings**

Activists Mobilizing for Power will get you amped!

By MATTHEW ANDERSON
Special to *The Voice*

Are you a resident of a Seattle Housing Authority community who is actively involved in resident council, social justice organizations, and working to better your community through service? The Resident Leadership Development Team is looking to send people who desire to improve their leadership skills and gain knowledge that will enhance their involvement in their communities to the 2013 Activists Mobilizing for Power (AMP) conference, July 26 – 28.

This summer a group of motivated residents will be chosen to attend the AMP conference in Portland, Ore. The conference consists of three days of advanced training and is not for beginners. Northwest-area leaders and activists will be attending and sharing their expertise, making new contacts and receiving new training. Attendees will choose from a variety of workshops related to legislative advocacy, organizational development and movement building. For a full list of workshops and a more in-depth description of the conference please visit the AMP website at www.westernstatescenter.org/our-work/amp.

Past Seattle Housing attendees of AMP have found themselves quickly utilizing

their new-found knowledge. At a recent conference reunion, one attendee described the conference as a “transforming experience.” He shared how it had helped him in implementing new ideas into his community.

Another attendee explained how the AMP conference had helped her realize she was not alone, but part of a larger group of people advocating for social justice. What will your memories of AMP be? Don’t miss out on this great opportunity for Seattle Housing Authority residents.

The Resident Leadership Development Team will be accepting applications for those interested in attending the conference beginning on March 15 through May 1. This will include an in-person interview to be scheduled at a later date. An additional two-day training hosted by the Resident Leadership Development Team will be provided in March or April. This training will enhance your chances of being selected as an AMP attendee. Applicants will be selected no later than May 31. You may receive a paper application from your Resident Council or a Seattle Housing Authority Community Builder. For all other questions and information, including online application requests and submissions, please contact Matthew Anderson at Amp2013SHA@yahoo.com.

Love of cooking brings NewHolly neighbors together



PHOTO COURTESY OF NEWHOLLY COMMUNITY BUILDING OFFICE

Attendees at a recent Community Kitchens: NewHolly event included Lissa Munger, Halima Antee, Aun Neov, Rebecca Lane, Cynda Rochester, Angie Hudkins, Hiroko Spees, Bill Flaherty, Abeba Milate and Lima Cheng.

By LIMA CHENG
Special to *The Voice*

 I love cooking. I love everything about cooking. I love the smells, the tastes, the textures, the colors. Cooking is my teacher — it brings out my creativity; my friend — I do some of my best “life-sorting” when I cook; my mother — it comforts while prompting reason and my love.

Cooking is a source of endorphins, the wonderful biochemical that can provide a rush of euphoria. And it’s also a source of relaxation — that’s a lot coming from me, since I’m a massage therapist. It relaxes and inspires at the same time.

Of course, one of my favorite parts about cooking (besides eating) is learning ethnic

cuisines, which is why I enjoy being a part of Community Kitchens: NewHolly (CK:NH). When we talked about how to describe the group, one member said, “We work to bring neighbors together to cook and share food. People get to learn new cooking skills, eat yummy food, and make new friends. It is a group open to any and all NewHolly residents.”

As a group, we have sole deciding power on ingredients and the menu. The lovely thing is that, due to the diversity of our neighborhood, the scope of the menu is limitless. Not only do we get to learn the fare of other cultures, but food just has a way of uniting people and creating a quick and beautiful bridge over the language gap. I’ve bonded

Please see “Kitchen” on Page 3



Reader’s viewpoint

Readers of *The Voice* share their ideas

In Yesler, streetcar work an unwelcome guest



PHOTO BY TYLER ROUSH

Workers at the intersection of Yesler and Broadway make progress on the First Hill Streetcar project Monday, Feb. 25. The intersection near the heart of the Yesler Terrace neighborhood was closed for three weeks in February. Other sections of Yesler Way remain closed this month.

By KRISTIN O’DONNELL
Yesler Terrace resident

Seattle is building a new streetcar line from the International District Light Rail Station to the under-construction Capitol Hill Light Rail Station. The route is intended to give riders a better way to get to hospitals and doctors’ offices on First Hill, but stops inconveniently far from every hospital except Swedish. Planned stops are much farther apart than current bus stops. “Shelters” are similar to those on the South Lake Union Trolley, which do not keep off the rain or give riders a place to sit while they wait.

The city’s brochures and project website notify street users in the construction zone to expect parking restrictions, lane restrictions, full intersection closures on weekends, bus stop closures and reroutes, short-term utility interruptions (with advance notice from Seattle Public Utilities), nighttime and weekend work, and sidewalk and pedestrian detours.

The project website also promises that “SDOT is closely coordinating with area agencies, organizations, developers and event planners to ensure safe and efficient travel for all street users during the construction of the First Hill Streetcar.”

But what to expect during construction is very different for people in Yesler Terrace than for residents and businesses elsewhere on the route. “Safe and efficient travel for all street users” does not include street users who live in public housing. Sections of Yesler Way and Broadway — two of the primary arterials through the neighborhood — are closed from Feb. 9 until the first week of April.

Transit reroutes make it very difficult and sometimes impossible for older and disabled residents to use the bus. Long detours and a lack of parking make it hard for drivers to get home, and are very bad for those who operate home businesses. Nighttime construction is followed by days

of minimal — and sometimes no — activity. Lanes that could be opened to one-way traffic when construction activity isn’t taking place remain barricaded.

At a community meeting that was called but not well-publicized by the Seattle Department of Transportation, Metro staff suggested that residents who were unable to use the bus during reroutes could use taxi scrip (discounted, but still costly — more so because of detours) or Access buses. Because Access bus eligibility requires a letter from a physician, an evaluation at Harborview and a 21-day waiting period, it is not likely to get people to a grocery store before April.

Department of Transportation staff told those attending the meeting that the Yesler/Broadway section of the route is “different.” Certainly the route through Yesler Terrace is being treated much differently than every other section of the construction that is taking place on major streets with transit routes.

At the Community Council meeting in February, residents shared our concerns about construction noise, unannounced utility shut-offs and the isolation and loss of business that the long-term street closure has caused. We decided to take our concerns to the City Council, and met with Councilmember Tom Rasmussen, Chair of the Transportation Committee, on Feb. 26.

We want notification before streets are closed and transit stops are closed or moved. We want accurate information about temporary stop locations. We want notification of utility shut-offs. We want this information in multiple languages.

If we are unable to get the street closures made short-term and temporary (like most of the rest of the route) we want accessible transportation provided for people who are now unable to use the bus, at no greater cost than bus fare.

We are asking not for sympathy, but solutions.

About The Voice

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

If you’d like to submit an article, or if you have a question about anything you’ve read in this publication, please contact Editor Tyler Roush at 206-461-8430, ext. 227 or by e-mail at tylerr@nhwa.org.

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



Please recycle me



What's in that bottle under your sink? How to safely handle household cleaning products

ROCHELLE SAEDI
Special to *The Voice*

"If cleaning products with chemicals are so bad, why are they sold in the stores?" This was one question raised by a participant at High Point Center's workshop on hazardous home cleaning products.

Hosted by the King County Local Hazardous Waste Management Program, 30 people both from the High Point community and the local businesses surrounding it filled the cozy Family Center room to learn many of the harmful health effects of such common items as bleach and detergent. Participants learned to interpret signal words on labels that indicate the level of danger the product can cause to one's health.

"The four words I learned that can help me to choose less harmful cleaning products are: 'Cautious,' 'Warning,' 'Dangerous' and 'Poison,'" said Sothea Thong, a High Point resident.

What many did not know before this workshop is that different words indicate different levels of health hazard. A product labeled "Caution" is less hazardous than one labeled as "Warning," "Danger" or "Poison," the scale of danger indicated in order from least harmful to most harmful.

Some of the common health effects cited by workshop participants using typically toxic products such as oven cleaners, drain cleaners and acid-based toilet cleaners are burning eyes and knees, respiratory dif-

ficulty and induced asthma.

One workshop participant works at the laundromat down the street and shared that he had never made the connection between the symptoms he experiences and the cleaning products he uses at the laundromat.

"It might take some time, but I plan to change the cleaning products we use at the laundromat now that I recognize their health effects," he said.

Some safety topics covered included protecting yourself by using gloves, keeping the cleaning area well ventilated, never mixing cleaning products together (particularly bleach), reading labels carefully, and when possible making your own cleaning products. Participants were invited to take home ingredients and recipes for making their own natural cleaning products.

The value of such information is great; the health consequences of not understanding the harm to one's health are also great. Low-income communities are often left out of the sustainability conversation, despite suffering first and suffering the most from environmental decay.

The consequence of this reality directly impacts housing, health and access to resources. Through the Neighborhood House Living Green initiative, hosted primarily under PROMISE education programs, a gap in access to knowledge is starting to be bridged.

Be on the lookout for similar workshops and programs at Neighborhood House sites.

Make your own safe alternatives to typically hazardous cleaning products

The following do-it-yourself recipes provide a safe, health-conscious alternative to what are typically harmful cleaning products.

- Linoleum floor cleaner — Vinegar and water

Mop your floors with a solution made from a half cup of white vinegar mixed into a bucket of warm water. The vinegar odor goes away when the floor dries.

- All-purpose cleaner for floors, toilets, walls and woodwork — Murphy's Oil Soap

Add a drop of soap to a wet washcloth and rub briskly. A cloth will last longer and create less waste than a sponge.

- Drain cleaner — Baking soda, vinegar and boiling water

This recipe will free minor clogs and help prevent future clogs. Pour one half cup of baking soda down the drain, then add one half cup of white vinegar and let fizz for a few minutes. Then pour a pot of boiling water down the drain. Repeat if needed. If it's still clogged, use a plunger. If that does not work, use a mechanical snake.

- Oven cleaner — Baking soda and water

A simple mixture of baking soda and water is not toxic to you or a child. Mix one cup of baking soda with enough water to make a paste. Put on oven surfaces and let soak. Use a scouring pad and scrub. Try using a spatula to remove baked-on food. Spot clean regularly and use a liner; dirty ovens are less energy-efficient. Do not use this mixture for self-cleaning ovens.

- Tub and sink cleaner — Baking soda and Murphy's Oil Soap

Use baking soda instead of scouring powder. Sprinkle it on fixtures and rub with a wet cloth. Add a dab of soap to the cloth for more cleaning power. Rinse well to avoid leaving a hazy film.

- Glass cleaner — Vinegar and water

Put one quarter cup of vinegar into a spray bottle and fill to the top with water. Spray on and rub with a lint-free cloth or newspaper. For outdoor windows use a sponge and wash with water mixed with a few drops of liquid soap. Rinse well and squeegee dry.

- Toilet bowl cleaner — Baking soda and Murphy's Oil Soap

Sprinkle baking soda inside the bowl, add a few drops of soap, and scrub with a toilet brush. Wipe down surfaces with a cloth sprinkled with baking soda.

You can also do your own research, protect yourself with knowledge and be your own advocate.

For more information on toxic chemicals

in and around your home, call the Household Hazards Line at 206-296-4692 (interpreters available) or visit their website at www.HazWasteHelp.org.

Parents: Join the peer group at the High Point Center



Are you a parent of a preschooler or young child in the High Point community? The Neighborhood House Head Start team is hosting a parent peer group session from 8:45 a.m. – noon Tuesday, March 12 at the High Point Center.

Parents of preschoolers are encouraged to attend, as the event will focus on the kindergarten transition in general and West Seattle Elementary in particular. Representatives from the school will be on hand to meet parents and answer questions.

The parent peer group meets in the High Point Center's gross motor room, located on the building's lower floor outside the Head Start classrooms.

A light breakfast and refreshments will be provided; guests are encouraged to bring a dish to share with their neighbors. A small play area will be provided for young children.

Section 8

Continued from Page 1

encountered technical issues during the registration process.

The switch from paper registrations to online registrations went smoothly overall, but it was not without at least one problem. Shortly after the registration period opened, the agency quickly discovered that owners of two fraudulent websites were trying to lure lottery applicants by masquerading as legitimate Section 8 sites by advertising their services prominently in Google search results. The websites prompt visitors to provide personal and financial information. Thanks to the help of local

media, Seattle Housing was able to get the word out quickly that these sites should be avoided. With the help of federal agencies, the Seattle Housing was also able to get the ads removed from Google's search results during the registration period.

Sites like these should continue to be avoided as they will continue to pop up on Google. You can read more information on how to avoid Section 8 scam sites the housing authority's website at www.seattlehousing.org/waitlist/scam.html

If you have any questions about the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program or the lottery process, please call Seattle Housing's waitlist hotline at 206-239-1674.

we plan to sit down to eat together in the Gathering Hall. You're welcome to come for the cooking, the eating, or both! We also need to raise funds to purchase the food, so we're welcoming voluntary donations of any amount, with a suggested amount of \$3 per adult, \$1 per child, or \$5 per family.

If you'd like to be part of deciding the menu and planning future events, you will be very welcome. Please contact Rebecca Lane at 206-852-0218 or newhollycooks@gmail.com.

Hope to see you soon.

Lima Cheng is a resident of the New-Holly community.

Kitchen

Continued from Page 2

over slicing apples for apple crisp, doctoring spaghetti sauce for veggie pizzas and pouring coconut milk in Cambodian curry.

In the few months that I've been involved with CK:NH, I believe we have reached a group spirit that is friendly and approachable. Our decision-making meetings are actually fun — but really, we're talking about food, how can it not be fun?

Our next event is Tuesday, March 12, and all New Holly residents are invited to cook and share the meal. We meet at 4 p.m. at the Campus Kitchen to cook together. And

Keeping you safe from the 'silent killer'

Seattle Housing installing carbon monoxide detectors in its properties

BY SVEN KOEHLER
Seattle Housing Authority

It's easy to understand that a house fire is dangerous — even animals shy away from the sight of open flames. But when things burn, there are also dangers you can't see, such as carbon monoxide. Seattle Housing Authority is installing detectors in all its rental units to warn residents if this deadly gas is in the air of their homes.

You may have heard of the dangers of carbon monoxide, often written as CO and pronounced "Sea Oh." If there are high levels of CO, it can poison the air. Exposure to CO can cause people to faint, asphyxiate and die.

CO is formed during burning or other combustion, such as in a fireplace, barbecue grill, gas furnace, automobile engine or emergency generator. One of the dangerous things about CO is that it has no smell and no color, so you might never know it is present in the air unless there is a way to detect it.

A recent improvement in fire safety laws requires that all rental housing in Seattle be equipped with CO detectors. Seattle Housing Authority maintenance crews have been installing these devices, which look

just like the smoke detectors that residents are familiar with already. The detectors make a loud, piercing alarm sound if the level of CO becomes dangerous.

Usually, CO is vented outside when it is produced in furnaces and fireplaces, so it never builds up inside where it could make the air poisonous. But if someone uses a grill indoors, leaves a car running in a closed garage or if a fire gets out of control, CO can become just as deadly as a raging fire. Since it has no color, no smell, no taste and no sound, it is sometimes called the "silent killer."

That is why it is important to react if you hear your CO detector go off. Leave the room immediately. Make sure everyone else in your home does the same. Go outside to fresh air and call 911.

The fire department will come and measure the levels of CO in the air to see how big the threat is, and look for a source. They will ask you to ventilate the area with fresh air, and maybe turn off the appliance that is generating the CO until maintenance can be called.

All Seattle Housing Authority properties will have CO detectors by the end of May. Do not ignore a CO alarm if it goes off, and make sure to notify your property manager after you have moved to safety and called 911. It could be a problem with an appliance that needs to be fixed, or it could be a false reading or a low battery on the detector. Either way, get to know your new CO detector — it is your protection against this silent killer.



Neighborhood House

Strong Families. Strong Communities. Since 1906.

Healthy living: Ways to celebrate spring, plus a mushroom soup recipe to ward off those chilly days

BY ADRIANE VETTER
Special to *The Voice*

As I sit here writing this, the sun's been out a couple of times, and though it's late in the day, it's still light outside.

Two days ago, I saw a fat little robin having its afternoon meal on a neighborhood lawn. Yes, I think spring's around the corner, and that brings to mind things to do once the weather clears up even more.

How about a visit to a local museum, with a small group of friends, to view an art exhibit? A lot of museums offer free or discounted admission for students and seniors; many local museums, including the Seattle Art Museum, Seattle Asian Art Museum and the Museum of History and Industry, offer free admission on the first Thursday of each month.

These "First Thursdays" draw larger-than-normal crowds but are a great opportunity to visit some wonderful local museums.

If they're in walking distance and the weather's fair, a good walk is a great way to get in some cardio activity and help your joints and heart feel even better.

You could make some sandwiches, bring a thermos of your favorite tea and maybe some fruit (which is even better if you pick it out at the local farmer's markets, as it has no pesticides or GMO's to worry about), and have an afternoon tea with friends.

Pick up some scones and call it "high tea." One of my favorite things to do to make myself feel better is either go to tea at a local coffee shop, or just have tea at home with my mate.

Another thing to do to celebrate spring is to clean out the closet and start moving the winter things more to the back and lighter, spring items to the front. Do keep some warm stuff, though, because as everyone knows, the Northwest weather scene can

be changeable.

I like to have my own "nature walks" by paying attention to what the local crows or other birds are doing and see if there are any "visitors" around. That would be birds that aren't local, but sometimes come into the area for a bit because the food here's more plentiful this time of year.

I've seen a certain green hummingbird on several occasions, and just watching the little thing from my window can pick up my mood and guarantee a happier day.

Try it, and maybe bring friends and a bird book along from the library. See how many species you can spot!

Finally, though it's getting nicer outside, it's still soup weather — and soup, especially homemade, is a good way to get antioxidants, vitamins and minerals into your body.

My new favorite soup is made from lion's mane mushrooms, which I get at the Sunday farmer's market in Ballard. I stir fry the mushrooms in olive oil, after washing them gently and slicing them in thin slices with a little chopped onion.

Then add the mushrooms and onion to sliced carrots, chopped leeks, two chopped garlic cloves and, if you like, some sliced artichokes. Cover with a good vegetable broth, add salt and pepper, a bit of cayenne pepper and a half-cup of cider vinegar. Let simmer until all of the veggies are soft and well-cooked.

You can also add either a cup of hemp milk or rice milk for a low calorie and healthy way to make the soup even heartier. Serve with a good cheese, some bread or crackers and a salad for a good almost spring meal.

The lion's mane mushrooms are high in many antioxidants and are a good support for a healthy immune system, so feel free to have as much as you like!

Yesler committee honors a departing member, welcomes the new



PHOTO COURTESY OF SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Yesler Terrace Citizen Review Committee (CRC) Chair Adrienne Quinn presents a certificate of appreciation to Yesler Terrace resident and CRC member Kristin O'Donnell for her years of service on the committee. O'Donnell is stepping down from the committee to give others in Yesler the opportunity to work with the CRC.

A mainstay on the Yesler Terrace Citizen Review Committee (CRC) and, indeed, in the Yesler community, is passing the baton.

Having completed her term on the CRC, Kristin O'Donnell is stepping aside to let others have an opportunity to serve on the committee.

The CRC, comprised of Yesler Terrace residents, neighbors, service providers, local civic and business leaders and others, is an advisory committee representing local interests through the redevelopment process.

Eleven Yesler Terrace residents representing eight different language groups currently serve on the CRC.

The 2013 membership includes:

- Mulu Amare (Tigrigna)
- Maza Gebriel Desta (Tigrigna)
- Faduma Isaq (Somali/Oromo)
- Halima Jaarso (Oromo)
- Abdisamad Jama (Somali)
- Yin Lau (Cantonese)
- Angela O'Brien (English)
- Mumina Osman (Maay Maay)
- Art Rea (English)
- Ngu Vu (Vietnamese)
- Xinyu Wang (Mandarin)

If you are a Yesler resident and would like to get in touch with one of your CRC representatives, contact Angela O'Brien at 206-403-8746 or aobrien206.7@gmail.com.

Opportunities abound at your local library

There's a world of learning waiting for you at the library. Resident of Rainier Vista and High Point, read on to find out what's happening at a library near you.

Columbia Branch

 4721 Rainier Ave. S
206-386-1908

Hours

10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays

10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays

1 p.m. - 5 p.m. Sundays

Library events

Homework Help

5 - 7:45 p.m. Mondays and 6 - 7:45 p.m. Tuesdays

Homework Help volunteers will be at this branch to assist students on a drop-in basis throughout the school year, with the exception of school holidays.

Preschool Story Time

11 - 11:30 a.m. Wednesdays

It is story time at the Columbia Branch! Bring your preschoolers to enjoy stories, rhymes, songs and fun with the children's librarian, Miss Erica.

Grupo Bilingüe de Juegos / Bilingual Kaleidoscope Play & Learn

10 a.m. - 11:30 p.m. Thursdays

Grupo Bilingüe de juegos para padres y cuidadores con niños entre las edades de Nacimiento hasta 5 años. / Bilingual play group for ages birth to 5.

Giờ đọc truyện tiếng Việt! (Vietnamese Story Time at the Columbia Branch)

Noon - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays (Second and fourth Saturdays of each month)

Thư viện công cộng Seattle tổ chức giờ đọc truyện bằng tiếng Việt cho trẻ em! (The Seattle Public Library is hosting Vietnamese Story Times for young children!)

¡Hora De Cuentos! (Spanish Story Time)

Noon - 12:30 p.m. Saturdays (First and third Saturdays of each month)

Es una hora de cuentos para los niños en la biblioteca de Columbia! (It is Spanish story time at the Columbia Branch!)

Toddler Story Time

11 - 11:30 a.m. Saturdays

It is story time at the Columbia branch. Bring your toddlers to enjoy stories, rhymes, songs and parachute fun with our children's librarian.

Game On! Teen Gaming

3 - 5 p.m. Tuesdays (Second Tuesday of each month)

Come to the Library for board games, Kinect, Wii play and Mario Kart! For ages 12-18.

Teen Advisory Group

3:30 p.m. - 5 p.m. Wednesdays (Third Wednesday of each month)

Earn service learning hours while being creative at the Library! Plan library programs, create displays, write blog posts and more.

Let's Talk About Books

1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Sundays (Last Sunday of each month)

Have you read a good book lately? Share book recommendations with your friends and neighbors.

High Point Branch

 3411 SW Raymond St.
206-684-7454

Hours

1 - 8 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays

11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays

1 p.m. - 5 p.m. Sundays

Closed Fridays

Library events

Homework Help

3 - 8 p.m. Mondays, 4 - 8 p.m. Tuesdays and 4 - 6 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays

Homework Help volunteers will be at this branch to assist students on a drop-in basis throughout the school year, with the exception of school holidays.

Family Story Time

7 - 7:30 p.m. Mondays

It is story time at the High Point Branch! Bring your children to enjoy stories, rhymes, songs and fun with the children's librarian.

Drop-in Chess

4 - 5:30 p.m. Tuesdays

Come play a game of chess! Children and teens are invited to drop by for fun and casual games of chess.

Seattle Reads "Stories for Boys" Book Group

6:30 p.m. - 7:45 p.m. Tuesdays (Third

Tuesday of each month)

Join us for a discussion of Gregory Martin's "Stories for Boys," the 2013 Seattle Reads featured work.

Baby Story Time

11:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. Wednesdays

It is story time at the High Point Branch! Bring your babies (ages 0-12 months) to enjoy stories, rhymes, songs and fun with the children's librarian.

Sheeko Xariiro Ku Bixi Doonta Afka Somaaliga Ayaalagu Qaban Doonaa Laybareeriga High Point (Somali Story Time at the High Point Branch)

5 - 5:30 p.m. Wednesdays

Fadlan Keen Caruurtaada Si Ay U Qaataan Waqti Xiiso leh, Iyo Sheeko Xariiro Ku Bixi Doonta Afka Soomaaliya. (It is Somali Story Time at the High Point Branch! Bring your children to enjoy stories, rhymes and fun in Somali.)

Toddler Story Time

11:30 a.m. - noon Thursdays

It is story time at the High Point Branch! Bring your toddlers to enjoy stories, rhymes, songs and fun with the children's librarian.

Talk Time

1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m. Thursdays

Come to a free English as a Second Language (ESL) conversation group to practice speaking English.

Game On!

3:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. Thursdays (First Thursday of each month)

Come to the library for board games, open Kinect and Wii play for ages 12-17.