

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.

Don't knock it
HOW TO HOST A BLOCK PARTY
See Page 6



SHA NEWS

June
2010

News and information about Seattle's neighborhoods

Consumer plastics: The good guys and the bad guys

BY PAMELA WILCOX
SHA Resident

On the bottom of plastic containers, one usually finds a number, surrounded by three arrows in the shape of a triangle, with capital letters underneath. It looks like a recycling symbol, but it's actually a labeling code that tells you what type of plastic the container is made of.

From these symbols, you can tell how safe the plastic is to use.

The good guys

According to the National Geographic Society's Green Guide, the following are the safest plastics for repeated use in storing food:

Plastic #2 (HDPE, or high-density polyethylene) is used for glue containers, milk and juice cartons and utility pails.

Plastic #4 (LDPE, or low-density polyethylene) is commonly used in Tupperware and Rubbermaid containers.

Plastic #5 (PP, or polypropylene) is the most common. It is also used to make Tupperware and Rubbermaid containers, as well as plant pots, spice bottles, trash bins and many other containers.

Also considered safe by the Green Guide are most food-storage plastics, such as those that appear in products made by Glad, Ziploc, Hefty and Saran, and presumably the generic versions of these products.

The bad guys

You might be surprised that harmful plastics are commonplace, and appear in a variety of products.

Plastic #1 (PETE or PET, or polyeth-

Please see "Plastics" on Page 6

UW nursing students turn isolation into access at South Park Manor



PHOTO BY TYLER ROUSH

Residents of South Park Manor and students in Concord Elementary School's Head Start program worked on an art project together during an afternoon visit in May.

BY TYLER ROUSH
The Voice editor

On a sunny spring day last month, the community room in South Park Manor rang with the sounds of chattering preschoolers. A group of students from the Head Start program at Concord Elementary School had come to work on an art project and enjoy snacks with the residents of the SSHP building in Seattle's South Park neighborhood.

About two-dozen youngsters worked side-by-side with a few seniors to create butterflies from glue, construction paper and feathers.

"We call them our grandmas and grandpas," said teacher Marlene Vasquez.

Jason Madrano and Yoli Stetson, graduate students in the UW School of Nursing, partnered with Vasquez to host intergenerational programming at South Park Manor.

"It's good to have intergenerational con-

tact," Madrano said. "Young people get to meet older people and interact in a positive environment. Both seniors and kids get something from each other."

As Madrano put it, the program helps to "bridge some of the gaps" between South Park Manor and the community.

"South Park is isolated geographically, and isolated within the community," Madrano said, referring both to the neighborhood — one of Seattle's southernmost and separated from other neighborhoods by the Duwamish River and the corridors for state highways 99 and 509 — and to the senior housing building.

Partway through the afternoon, South Park Manor resident Bruce Sutton, 75, joined the group, bringing along his dog, Levi — a senior himself at age 12.

Throughout the next hour, enthralled

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John Littel elected to chair SHA Board

BY SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY STAFF

On Monday, April 19, Housing Authority Commissioner John Littel was elected by the Board of Commissioners to be the Board chair. He served as vice chair for the past year while Yusuf Cabdi held the position of chair.

Littel is the political director for a Northwest trade union. He was previously assistant to the executive secretary of the Seattle Building Trades Council, where he was responsible for negotiations and labor relations at the Seattle and King County Housing Authorities.

Commenting on his election to chair, Littel said, "I'm honored to represent my fellow commissioners as the Board chair. The Housing Authority has an abiding mission and commitment to develop and maintain affordable housing that has enduring value for our residents and the community. I embrace that mission and commitment.

"We have challenges in front of us that will require broad community support, including the Yesler Terrace redevelopment and other projects. I believe that my role as Board Chair is to help develop that community support for our efforts to create new housing and provide both housing and economic opportunities for our residents."

Nora Gibson will serve as Board vice-chair. She is executive director of a nonprofit organization that provides adult day health services in the Pacific Northwest. Her 30-year career has focused on providing community-based long-term care for aging adults.

Executive Director Tom Tierney thanked Yusuf Cabdi for his service over the past year.

"I know it is a significant responsibility to chair this board," he said. "Mr. Cabdi took that responsibility very seriously and carried it out well. I look forward to working with John Littel and Nora Gibson in their new roles."

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Fourteen appointed to new disability commission

Seattle City Council has confirmed the first 14 people who will serve as commissioners on the new Seattle Commission for People with Disabilities (SCPWD).

Mark Adreon, Joshua Caple, Rebecca C. Cory, Charlene Curtiss, Patricia Copeland, John Denooyer (Bayview Tower resident), Hope Drummond, Vickie Foster (Housing Choice Voucher holder), Laura Gramer, Mary Beth Lum, Erica Sekins, Gary Stobbe, Deborah Witmer, and Sara Woody will serve on the volunteer commission that will advise the mayor, city council, and city departments on issues affecting people with disabilities, as well as help to foster understanding between people with disabilities and city

government.

Seven commissioners were appointed by Mayor Mike McGinn and seven by Seattle City Council. Commissioners themselves will nominate two additional members, including one person age 18-29 to be appointed in September through the YMCA's Get Engaged Program. All appointments are subject to City Council confirmation.

The mission of the SCPWD is to promote the full participation of people with disabilities in all areas of economic, political, and community life in the City of Seattle.

The duties of the Commission include informing the Mayor, City Council, and City departments about issues of importance to

people with disabilities; assuring access to City services and facilities; recommending policies, practices, and legislation to the City in matters affecting the concerns of people with disabilities; and encouraging understanding among people with various disabilities as well as between people with disabilities and the larger Seattle community.

SCPWD is not designed to handle individual complaints about accommodation and access for people with disabilities. People who believe they may have been discriminated against on the basis of disability should continue to contact the Seattle Office for Civil Rights directly to discuss their situations.

For more information call 206-684-4500 or visit www.seattle.gov/civilrights.



One to grow on

Garden tips for community gardeners

Summer season is the time to look at your garden's watering plan

BY ANZA MUENCHOW
Special to *The Voice*

The warm season is in full swing now. For best production, consider now the strategies to keep your plants healthy and disease-free. Firstly, let's look at the watering plan.

Generally you will add at least one or two inches of water to your garden twice each week. This will depend greatly on your soil type. If you have sandy soil, you will need to water more often. Sand allows the water to pass through quickly. And more importantly, the extra watering carries the important plant nutrients with it.

Try using some extra fertilization, like a liquid fish fertilizer. This is high in nitrogen and works especially well for the leafy green vegetables. I recommend it for your basil, lettuce, broccoli and spinach. Other crops can benefit from a side dressing of a more balanced fertilizer like a seed meal, kelp or feather meal.

If you have a high percentage of clay in your soil, you will retain more moisture and nutrients. But do not let your soil become excessively dry. The clay in your soil will actually repel water once it gets too dry. So, water clay soil slowly and deeply twice a week, depending on the weather. And remember that a wind can dry soil more quickly.

The best way to know how much to water

your garden is to dig down into your soil and check it. Your soil should be damp just below the surface. Don't let it dry out more than an inch or two below the surface.

Keeping soil damp is much easier if you can cover your beds with a rich compost or other weed-free mulch. Use three or four inches of well-decomposed matter, and nothing too fresh. Sometimes I have saved a pile of dried leaves from the fall raking and use that in summer to keep my top soil cooler, moister and weed-free.

Grass clippings or straw can work, too. Watch out for slugs on this coarse mulch though. You will reap the benefits of this mulch the following year when you turn it in to plant again. But don't mulch your onions or garlic, as they don't like their shoulders covered.

Allowing your soil to dry out stresses plants, causing them to be more susceptible to diseases and pests like aphids, powdery mildew, thrips, etc. One of the best ways to irrigate would be using drip or soaker hoses and regularly soaking the root zones of your crops. These systems keep the water at the roots and off the leaves and conserve water by reducing evaporation. Many plants, such as tomatoes, beans, squash and basil hate water on their leaves.

It is okay to allow some water on peas and Brassicas (choy, kale, broccoli, cabbage,

Please see "Garden" on Page 5

Be safe

Four tips to be safe and build community this summer

BY SEATTLE NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP

The summer season is upon us once again. The last day of the school year is June 22. Here are four tips to "Be Safe" and "Build Community."

Tip 1. Wear bicycle helmets for summer riding.

If your kids like to ride bikes, get them fitted with bicycle helmets. Cascade Bicycle Club sells low cost bicycle helmets at several community events during the summer. You can check their Web site to see where they will be on which dates.

Visit www.cbcef.org/bike-helmet-sales.html for more information.

Tip 2. Make a difference with youth in your community.

Studies have shown that youth do well when adults take an interest in them.

So when you are walking down the street and you see a young person, greet him or her. Take an interest in the youth who are living in your community, not just when they are doing something wrong but also when they are doing something right. Offer to take a kid fishing. Challenge a group of youth to a basketball game. Develop an art project with youth in the neighborhood.

The possibilities are endless and the rewards are beyond measure.

Tip 3. Ask for census worker identification.

If you did not send in your census form

or if you sent it late you may have someone knocking on your door between May 1st and July 10th.

Then in the month of July and early August there will be people from the Census Bureau out checking to make sure that the information collected was correct. Finally, between August 14th and into October there will be census takers contacting residents to clarify any unanswered questions or other issues such as expected births and deaths in the family. If you suspect that someone claiming to be a Census worker is not who they claim to be you can call the US Regional office. That number is 425-908-3000.

Tip 4. Attend a "Be Safe" Personal Safety Workshop.

Seattle Neighborhood Group sponsors a free summer "Be Safe" Workshop for residents living in affordable housing. The Workshop includes a personal safety presentation, a resident safety panel, lunch, a talk by a Seattle City Council member on public safety issues, and door prizes.

Please call Allan Davis of SNG at 206-323-7094 or e-mail allan@sngi.org for Workshop information and date.

Allan Davis (206-323-7094) and Kelly McKinney (206-323-7084) are Community Education Coordinators for Seattle Neighborhood Group. Call Allan or Kelly for crime prevention information or help with your safety and security concerns.



Letters to the Editor

Readers of *The Voice* speak out

Long walk from light rail to airport terminal

To the editor:

Kristin O'Donnell does a creditable job, providing the connection details for a transit holiday in Bellingham. My admiration is furthermore boundless, for her ability to get a 6:45 a.m. downtown bus, to get it underway.

I am really writing this, however, to comment on the new high-speed transit routing to the airport, as Jim Bush makes no mention of its most distressing feature

... a long and wearisome walk between the line's southern terminus and the air terminal proper. For anyone on foot, hauling baggage — especially seniors — this is a problem badly in need of resolution. ... like an available shuttle of some sort, or the means to request one. A two-bit charge could probably pay for it, and would be well worth it, even to corner-cutting travelers like this one.

Irv Thomas

Comments sought on new parking policies

BY SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY STAFF

Seattle Housing Authority invites residents to review and submit written comments on revisions to parking policies at Housing Authority buildings.

A new section on disabled parking has been added in order to clarify the use of and limits for designated disabled parking spaces in Housing Authority-owned lots.

The section on vehicle repairs has been revised to read as follows: "No repairs of resident vehicles are permitted in Seattle Housing Authority-owned parking lots. Under no circumstances shall a vehicle that constitutes a hazard be left unattended."

Other minor revisions have been made

to the policy.

Copies of the revised policies are available in Seattle Housing Authority Management offices. Residents who wish to make comments on this policy should submit them in writing. Comments may be returned to the Community Management Office, emailed to dfoss@seattlehousing.org or mailed to:

POLICY COMMENTS – Donna Foss
Seattle Housing Authority
Housing Operations Department
P.O. Box 19028
Seattle, WA 98109

All comments must be received in writing by 5 p.m. at the close of business on June 30.

Access

Continued from front page

youngsters in groups of twos and threes went over to say hello to Levi, lingering a while before turning their attention to whatever new adventure awaited.

Sutton spoke highly of living in South Park Manor, and called the intergenerational program "a beautiful idea."

"I love South Park, I really do," he said. "The people are great. I'm very happy here."

Access to technology

The social divide isn't the only one that Madrano and Stetson have tried to close in their work at South Park Manor. The two are also endeavoring to close the digital divide by getting a new computer and high-speed internet for the building's

community room.

They're partnering with Seattle Community Network (www.scn.org) to get a computer donated to the building, and with the City of Seattle to get access to no-cost high-speed internet.

A computer would mean access to a host of services online, and make communicating with loved ones both easier and potentially quite a bit less expensive.

"Access to services (online) is essentially free," Madrano said. "It's hard to justify the cost of a long-distance phone call versus e-mail."

"Computers with internet are a ubiquitous part of modern life," he concluded.

A third step — access to transportation — is also in the works. The nursing students are working with Metro transit to get a bench installed at a nearby bus stop.



Please recycle me



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 Seattle Housing 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 Tyler Roush at 206-461-8430, ext. 227 or by e-mail at tylerr@nhwa.org.

If you have questions about Seattle Housing-related stories, you may also contact Seattle Housing Authority 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.