

The mission of the King County Housing Authority is to provide quality affordable housing opportunities and to build communities through partnerships. We encourage self-sufficiency and we protect the dignity of people with limited resources while safeguarding the public trust.

Renovating Riverton
RESIDENTS ENJOY REMODEL
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KCHA NEWS

April
2008

A resource for King County Housing Authority residents

New housing to break ground at Greenbridge

By JOHN ELIASON
King County Housing Authority

Several hundred former Park Lake Homes residents already have moved into the colorful, energy efficient rental homes that have replaced the site's obsolete World War II-era housing.

And more will have the chance to return once the King County Housing Authority completes the Greenbridge project's next phase, which is expected to break ground this month. Greenbridge is the mixed-income housing development that is replacing Park Lake Homes — the 1940s-era development that was King County's largest and oldest.

"Oh my goodness has it changed," Jeanne Servis, a former Park Lake Homes resident who has moved back to Greenbridge, said of the neighborhood. "The houses are very nice looking, and I love the parks."

The latest phase to begin construction will feature a mix of 88 apartments and townhouses within 14 multifamily buildings. The units will range in size from one to three bedrooms.

The new housing will be located on two currently vacant lots: one north of White Center Heights Elementary and one north of the Jim Wiley Community Center. Both blocks also will host retail spaces — for businesses such as shops or cafes — in



IMAGE PROVIDED BY GGLO ARCHITECTS

One of the new buildings planned at Greenbridge as part of the project's next phase of construction is shown above in an artistic rendering.

More inside

Turn to Page 2 to read about the newest face at Greenbridge, Rosie Taylor, who began work as a community builder in February.

the future.

The Greenbridge project's newest phase is expected to be finished in fall 2009.

A \$35 million federal HOPE VI grant that KCHA received in 2001 made the Greenbridge project possible.

Greenbridge is an award-winning, low-impact development that includes a wide range of community services and a family-friendly, pedestrian-oriented development.

Its blueprint also included plans for the new White Center Heights Elementary, which opened in fall 2004, and the completely renovated Wiley Community Center, which reopened last year.

A new Early Learning Center for infants through 5-year-olds, a YWCA including a King County branch library, new parks and

trails and retail shops along the tree-lined Eighth Avenue Southwest also are part of the project's vision.

"The kids have got a lot more things to do, more places to play and safer places to play," Servis said. "That's great for the kids. If they have safe places to go, they're less likely to get into trouble."

For those residents who have had to relocate during construction, KCHA has made sure they have continued to receive vital social services and comparable housing while living elsewhere.

Public hearing on Rent Reform planned for April

By KCHA STAFF

You're invited to a public hearing at 6 p.m. April 14, where you can make comments about proposed rent policy changes for seniors and residents with disabilities on fixed incomes. The hearing will be at the Kent Family Center, located at 13111 S.E. 274th St. in Kent.

You might recall that earlier this year, the King County Housing Authority started Rent Reform, a review of KCHA policies related to checking residents' income and

calculating rent for the Public Housing and Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher programs. KCHA wants to make the policies easier for you to understand and for staff to administer. The first part, which is the subject of the April public hearing, applies only to seniors and residents with disabilities on fixed incomes.

The Housing Authority already has been meeting with groups of residents, including the Resident Advisory Council, and community organizations to talk about possible improvements to its rent policies. But KCHA still would like to hear from you.

That's the reason for the April 14 public hearing — to provide residents and others with another chance to ask questions and provide input.

You can review a draft of the proposed changes by:

- Visiting KCHA's Administrative Office between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday at 600 Andover Park W. in Tukwila
- Going online to www.kcha.org/currentresidents/currentresidents.aspx and scrolling down to the middle of the page
- Making a request to have the information e-mailed to you by calling Kristin Winkel or Judi Jones at 206-574-1100, or

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KCHA to open new smoke-free building

By HEATHER MILLER
King County Housing Authority

A brand new, smoke-free building in a great community could be the right place for you to call home.

Nia is a four-story, 82-unit building that is under construction and expected to open this fall in White Center's growing Greenbridge development.

Between nine and 16 units will house adults with disabilities who are younger than 54.

The remaining units are open to households in which at least one member is 55 or older.

"We're actively looking for households who want to live at Nia," said Christina Friedenthal, KCHA's community services manager.

Once complete, Nia will become KCHA's first completely smoke-free building. Smoking will not be allowed there, and no one, including staff members and construction workers, has ever smoked there.

"No smoke will have ever touched anything," Friedenthal said.

The building will have controlled access, underground parking, an on-site property manager and a part-time support services coordinator who can provide



PHOTO BY HEATHER MILLER

Nia, a new building that primarily will serve seniors and individuals with disabilities, is under construction and expected to open this fall at Greenbridge.

information and referrals.

Nia is adjacent to King County Metro Transit bus routes, the Wiley Community Center, the YWCA Career Development Center and White Center Heights Elementary.

Also, a King County library branch is planned nearby, and the White Center Food Bank is less than a mile away.

"At Greenbridge, you're so close to so many services," Friedenthal said.

All Nia residents must earn at or below 60 percent of the area's median income,

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Celebrating Black History



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF KING COUNTY SOUTHWEST BRANCH

From left to right in the foreground, Jason, Marissa, Timothy, Choklate and Jvonne dance and clap along with the music at a recent Black History Month celebration.

Almost 150 children and teenagers at the Boys & Girls Clubs of King County's Southwest Branch experienced a night full of entertainment and learning at the club's recent Black History Month celebration.

Many performers used rap and hip-hop to

share positive messages with those who attended. Several youth also performed their own music, including a clarinet solo, an original rap solo and an a cappella solo.

The event was the brainchild of the club's program director, Chris Dunford.

Two more reasons to file a federal tax return this year

Even if you didn't earn enough money to be obligated to file a tax return, you still might be eligible for an economic stimulus payment or a tax refund from the federal government. But to get either one, you must file a tax return.

United Way of King County and the King County EITC Campaign provide free tax preparation services at sites across King County until April 15.

For more information about the free tax preparation sites, see the February issue of *The Voice* or go to www.uwkc.org/ourcommunity/endinghomelessness/eitc/where.asp.

Economic stimulus payment

Under the federal government's economic stimulus plan, individuals who file a tax return could receive a payment between \$300 and \$600, and married couples who file a joint tax return could receive between \$600 and \$1,200. Eligible taxpayers who qualify for a payment might receive an additional \$300 for each qualifying child. To qualify, a child must be younger than 17 as of Dec. 31, 2007.

All you have to do to get the stimulus payment is file a 2007 tax return using Form 1040 or Form 1040A and report at least

\$3,000 in qualifying income on the form.

You can include the amount of your Social Security benefits to qualify for the stimulus payment. Add the amount of your Social Security benefits to other qualifying income, such as wage earnings or certain benefits paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs, to reach the \$3,000 requirement. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) does not count as qualifying income for the stimulus payment.

Earned Income Tax Credit

Low-income working individuals and their families may be eligible to receive a tax refund between \$428 and \$4,716 if they apply for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit when they file their tax return.

You may be eligible for the EITC if, in 2007, you had a valid social security number for the purposes of work and:

- You earned income
- You have children and earned less than \$37,783 (or \$39,783 if married and filing a joint return)
- You do not have children and earned less than \$12,590 (or \$14,590 if married and filing a joint return)
- You get less than \$2,900 a year from interest and investments

White Center Food Bank minimizes hunger, nourishes community

Do you live in the White Center area and need a way to supplement the food on your dinner table? The White Center Food Bank might be able to help.

Once a month, you can receive three to five days worth of food at the food bank, located at 10829 Eighth Ave. S.W. in White Center. You'll get meat, fresh produce, bakery items, canned goods and more. To receive these services, you must bring a picture identification or some other verification of the address of everyone in the household.

The White Center Food Bank is open from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday and from 6 to 8 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month.

Cooking demonstrations by nutritionists also are scheduled for 10:30 a.m. every Wednesday except the third Wednesday of the month. The demonstrations are meant to help clients learn new ways to use the

food they receive and to eat more healthfully. The nutritionists have made dishes such as turkey chili, stuffed cabbage, carrot soup and baked squash. Those who attend get to try samples and take home copies of the recipes.

Special features

- The food bank also has a baby pantry – open from 1 to 4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday – that provides diapers, formula, baby food and more.
- Starting in March, the food bank began offering "Senior Days" from 11 a.m. to noon on Thursdays, especially for those 60 and older. Seniors can make visits twice monthly to receive food.
- At noon on April 12, the food bank will showcase the new White Center Heights Park Community Garden at Southwest 102nd Street and Seventh Avenue Southwest. You'll be able to check out the brand new raised beds, receive instruction on

New face at Greenbridge opens her door to residents

By HEATHER MILLER
King County Housing Authority

Her official title is community builder. But Rosie Taylor's job at Greenbridge involves building relationships between people, not new homes.

"Community advocate: that's how I want to be known," said Taylor, who started work with KCHA in February. "I'm there to help residents take advantage of the resources that are available for them and make sure those resources are available in the appropriate languages, so there are no barriers."

She wants Greenbridge residents to know that she's there to assist them however she can.

That could mean connecting residents with community services, or it could mean helping a resident with household questions, such as how to work an appliance.

"I have an open-door policy," Taylor said. "I'm not one you have to schedule

an appointment with. Please come see me."

In particular, she wants to link residents with other residents so that they can learn about how, as neighbors, they can help one another.

"Everyone has skills," Taylor said. "Often, people can exchange services, like babysitting."

Taylor has more than 25 years of social service experience and most recently managed a Seattle Public Schools program that helped prepare middle and high school students for college through mentoring, course planning, campus field trips and more.

Taylor remembers that during her childhood, her mother regularly took in other people's children and cared for them if the parents were going through a hard time. She says that family tradition taught her to always think about how she could help others.

"I learned that by listening, you hear more," Taylor said. "Sometimes people just need someone to listen to them."

Right now, Taylor is working to create a residents' community council. If you're interested in finding out more about the new council, just contact Taylor or please feel welcome to show up at a meeting.

"We want you to be part of this," she said.

You can reach Taylor by phone at 206-574-1162, by e-mail at RosieT@kcha.org or at her office at 9839 Eighth Ave. S.W. Suite 105 in White Center.



Rosie Taylor

Spring cleaning at Burndale



PHOTO BY HEATHER MILLER

KCHA AmeriCorps volunteers Nikki Anderson (left) and Emily Ausema (right) unload a box from the Burndale Homes Community Center's storage shed. They were among 10 AmeriCorps volunteers who participated in a March clean-up project that helped the center organize its inventory, including books, kitchen supplies and more.

Nia

Continued from front page

or \$34,200 for a one-person household. Half of the units are specifically for residents who make less than 30 percent of the area's median income, or \$17,100 for a one-person household.

Those who are interested in possibly living at Nia should submit an application for housing and mark Nia as a preference.

Submitting an application does not guarantee housing. Applications can be found at:

- Any KCHA management office, including the Central Office at 600 Andover Park W. in Tukwila
- The Quantum Office at Greenbridge, 9839 Eighth Avenue S.W., Seattle, by phone: 206-529-3233 or by e-mail: manager-nia@eschelon.com
- Online at www.kcha.org/lookingforhousing/applicationprocess.aspx.

Residents cheer recent renovation at Riverton

By DIANE STIPP
King County Housing Authority

Resident Floyd Daniel says he's grateful for many of the renovations both in and outside Riverton Terrace II — the building that has been his home for the past six years.

When he sees the new sprinkler system in his unit, Daniel thinks about how much safer he'll be in the event of a fire. On cold days, he's happy that his apartment stays warmer thanks to new window panes. And he likes the new fabric-covered bulletin boards that now hang outside each resident's unit.

"I like it because it lets you know what's coming up," Daniel said. "That's a whole lot better. It's a real attraction."

Residents, KCHA staff and guests enjoyed the opportunity to see the newly upgraded Riverton Terrace II mixed population building at an open house in March. The renovation project added critically needed fire-life safety system improvements and remodeled spaces and dramatically transformed the building's exterior.

Tukwila Mayor Jim Haggerton, Council Member Joan Hernandez, who is a former KCHA staff member, and others from the City of Tukwila joined with KCHA Executive Director Stephen Norman and staff from Housing Management and

Resident Services to marvel at the changes to the building.

Riverton Terrace is located near the future site of Tukwila Village, a planned mixed-use neighborhood center. There will be space for a King County Library branch as well as for the Tukwila Police Department's Neighborhood Resource Center.

Riverton Terrace is one of eight public housing buildings receiving vital safety improvements and beautifully remodeled community spaces as part of a recent \$25 million financing transaction.

"One of our top priorities is to maintain the highest possible standards of safety and well-being for our seniors and for persons with disabilities," Norman said.

In addition to the safety system upgrades, Riverton Terrace received a new, accessible entryway, an enlarged lobby and a completely new exterior. Inside the building, there are handrails, new carpeting, apartment doors and new lighting. It looks like a completely new building. Riverton Terrace also has a new patio off the community room and planter boxes to accommodate the gardeners in the building.

The building's residents handled the construction project with grace and good humor. And at the recent open house, many expressed appreciation for the changes to the building.



PHOTO BY HEATHER MILLER

Tukwila Mayor Jim Haggerton (left) shakes hands with Riverton Terrace resident Mary Porter (right) at a recent open house to celebrate the building's renovation. A big thanks goes to Porter for opening her unit to those who toured the building.

KCHA to seek resident input on conservation effort

By KCHA STAFF

Angela Wallis started work last year as the King County Housing Authority's first resource conservation manager.

She joins Sustainability Coordinator Joel Gregory to double KCHA's effort to protect the environment and conserve natural resources.



Angela Wallis

Wallis recently answered questions about her job and how she can help you save money and resources.

What is involved in your job?

My main job is to monitor how much water, electricity and gas KCHA uses every month at all of our properties.

Another part of my job is to help reduce the amount of water, gas and electricity used at all Public Housing properties. That means I'll be working with your property managers and maintenance staff to assist in their efforts to save resources.

What trends have you noticed so far?

Already, our public housing developments are making big strides. Public housing developments used 40 percent less water in 2007 than in the years of 2000-2003. Great job!

KCHA also has done a lot to help residents reduce their energy use, including installing energy efficient light bulbs, new lighting fixtures and energy-saving washers.

What can residents do to conserve natural resources and protect the environment?

Here are additional tips to help you

conserve even more:

- Use less hot water. For example, turn off the faucet while doing dishes, and wash clothes in cold water rather than warm or hot. That saves both electricity and water.
- Wash full loads of laundry.
- Turn out the lights in community and laundry rooms when you leave.
- Turn off the faucet while you're brushing your teeth.
- Report leaky toilets and faucets to your property manager.

In the coming months, I'll be asking for residents' assistance to find ways to further reduce the amount of water we use.

In the meantime, please contact me if you have questions or ideas at AngelaW@kcha.org.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you. Happy Earth Day!

Improve fire safety with spring cleaning

By KCHA STAFF

As budding flowers and April rain showers hint that spring has arrived, set aside a little time for that yearly sweep through your home. A cleaner house is a safer house. So as you start your spring cleaning, keep the following safety tips in mind:

- Most of the debris that piles up during the winter months — boxes, stacks of paper, old clothes and other useless clutter — offers an excellent place for a fire to start. And more fuel makes fires tougher for firefighters to put out. Clutter also might make it more difficult for those in your home to escape when a fire breaks out.

- Go through your closets and other storage areas to get rid of those things you don't ever use. Consider donating what you find to a thrift shop. At the very least, straighten things up and be sure that everything is at least three feet from water heaters, furnaces and other heat sources.

- Move matches and lighters out of the reach of children.

- Keep all cleaning products in their original containers with their original labels.

- Reduce or get rid of hazardous chemicals in your home.

Cleaners, paint and other common household chemicals can fuel a fire and often are bad for your health.

Maintain only the amount you need and be sure to use, store and dispose of household hazardous materials in a safe manner as outlined on the product.

Never mix chemicals, even when throwing them away.

A Springwood success



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE KENT POLICE DEPARTMENT

More than 150 people learned about job and volunteer opportunities at the second annual Springwood Career Fair in February at the Springwood Youth Center.

Participants were encouraged to bring their updated resumes and left with smart-looking clothes for their job search. Employers represented included KCHA, the City of Kent, Kent School District, AmeriCorps, the Washington State Liquor Control Board, Prudential Realty, Safeway and more.

While the career fair got underway downstairs, the center's upstairs was transformed into a clothing bank thanks to do-

nations from KCHA staff and many others across the community.

The event was part of the Public Housing Safety Initiative for KCHA's East Hill properties: Springwood, Cascade and Valli Kee. That's a federal program that works to educate residents about safe community practices, engage youth in positive activities and provide residents with job readiness training. The program, which is intended to create safer communities, also aims to improve communication between law enforcement and residents at those properties.

Rent reform

Continued from front page

by e-mailing rentreform@kcha.org

You also are welcome to submit written comments about the proposed changes before April 14 by sending your comments:

- By mail to KCHA Rent Reform Initiative, Attn: Kristin Winkel, 600 Andover Park W., Tukwila, WA 98188

- By e-mail to rentreform@kcha.org

Once these rent policy changes are complete, KCHA will start the second part of the process, which focuses on work-able adults and working families.

In addition to making policies easier to understand and administer, the Housing Authority wants to make changes that encourage work and increased savings.

