



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



The Voice

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Articles translated
into six languages

The newspaper of Neighborhood House

Event to address challenges of aging with limited income

By VOICE STAFF

An event for low-income adults who are interested in learning more about how to care for themselves as they age will take place this month.

The event, called Aging in Place with Limited Resources, will be held on Friday, May 12, at Courtland Place at Rainier Court, 3621 33rd Ave. South. It will run from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

This program is sponsored by Evercare in partnership with the Senior Housing Assistance Group and Senior Services.

Liz Taylor, a columnist with the Seattle Times, will be the featured speaker.

Event organizers will provide information on a range of programs for seniors who have limited financial resources.

This event is free and lunch will be provided. Registration is required by May 8, as space is limited. Those interested may call (206) 749-4323 to reserve a space.

Liz Taylor is a nationally-recognized expert in the field of aging. With 30 years of experience, she is a knowledgeable voice on the vast array of issues confronting the fastest growing segment of society — people 85 and older.

Taylor writes, lectures and works individually with families to become “smarter” consumers on a host of issues in the aging market. Her column, “Growing Older,” appears every Monday in The Seattle Times.

Evercare is a United Health Group insurance plan designed specifically to serve seniors who are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid. The cornerstone of the program is a registered nurse who coordinates and manages each patient’s care.

Senior Services is the largest nonprofit agency serving older people in Washington. Established in 1967, the agency serves over 50,000 seniors and their families each year through an integrated system of programs and services.

Since 1988, Senior Housing Assistance Group has provided affordable housing for income-qualified seniors throughout the Puget Sound region. With communities stretching from Bellingham to Olympia and with more than 3,000 apartments, Senior Housing Assistance Group is Washington’s largest provider of housing for elderly people and those who are elderly and disabled.

Tenants Union offers volunteer opportunities

By LYNN SEREDA
Voice reporter

Next year, the Tenants Union of Washington will celebrate its 30th anniversary of serving tenants and organizing for safe, healthy and affordable housing for all.

The organization offers a number of volunteer opportunities that may be of interest to residents of public housing communities.

Many people first come into contact with the TU (as it’s known) when they call the Tenant Phone Hotline (206) 723-0500 or visit the office with questions relating to their housing, be it an eviction notice, a deposit that hasn’t been returned, a repair that hasn’t been made or one of many other landlord/tenant issues.

Trained volunteers can tell people about the Washington and Seattle laws that pertain to their issue, help them figure out possible options and even provide referrals to legal assistance because the Tenants Union does not, itself, give legal advice or represent people in court.

One way to get involved with the work of the Tenants Union is to attend free training to become a Hotline/Drop-in Tenants Rights counselor.

Although the hotline has been in existence since the TU started, the training course started just two years ago, thanks to an anonymous donor who provided a grant earmarked for this training.

The training is an intensive seven-session (one per week) overview of Wash-

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Thousands rally for immigrants’ rights



PHOTO BY CECILIA MATTA

Thousands of people marched in support of immigrants’ rights from St. Mary’s Church in the Central District to the Federal Building in downtown Seattle.

By CECILIA MATTA
Voice reporter

Hundreds of mothers and fathers pushing baby buggies, dozens of labor and political activists handing out literature, many members of churches and community groups lofting colorful signs—these were among the estimated 20,000 people who rallied for immigrants’ rights last month at the Jackson Federal Building in Seattle.

In an inspiring show of support for fair and just immigration reform, most of the thousands of energetic marchers walked about three miles from St. Mary’s Church in the Central District to the Federal Building on Second Avenue in downtown Seattle.

The Seattle march and rally were among many that took place around the country on April 10, as hundreds of thousands of people participated in a National Day of Action, putting a human face on a vital economic and legislative issue facing our country.

The sea of signs and people on sunny Second Avenue served as a poignant reminder that the U.S. has always been a nation of immigrants. Good humor and earnest, hopeful messages abounded on brightly lettered signs and T-shirts:

“Columbus was illegal and he has a

holiday!”

“No human being is illegal!”

“America is the country of dreams!”

“I’m not a terrorist — I’m a waitress and a taxpayer!”

“We contribute too!”

“We want to help make America great.”

“I have hope.”

The rally had elements of a festival, celebrating the solidarity among immigrants and their supporters. American flags waved everywhere, as well as Mexican, Peruvian and other flags, reflecting the Latin American roots of many of the rallygoers.

Whole families marched joyfully and peacefully, frequently chanting “Si se puede—yes we can!” and responding to rally leaders’ cries in Spanish of “What do we want? Justice! When do we want it? Now!”

Many of the marchers walked to remind the country that America has long been a nation where generations of immigrants have sought freedom, self-determination and a better life.

One symbolic marcher drew a lot of attention in Seattle, though she was neither a speaker nor a rally organizer. Dina Johnson, who described herself as a “peace and democracy activist,” came costumed

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“I want to get information and insight from some of the other fathers here. Growing up for me wasn’t all that great, and I want better for my own,”

— Forum participant Shawn Cooper on why he attended the fatherhood event

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Town hall warns parents, kids about dangers of alcohol



PHOTO BY RAY LI

Parents listen to a presentation about ways to help their kids make healthy decisions and avoid alcohol and drug use.

By **KATIE TYBERG**
Voice intern

Alex Tokeo said he was surprised when so many kids, high school and college students, adults and even members of his own family and friends flooded into a town hall meeting about underage drinking in late March.

Tokeo is a peer educator for Neighborhood House's Project HANDLE, an HIV/AIDS and substance abuse prevention program that sponsored the meeting at the University of Washington campus.

"I felt good about (this meeting)," he said. "I wanted to make sure (my peers) go to the right path and hope the meeting gave them a right sense of what to do and what not to do."

The meeting was one of 63 town hall meetings, supported by the Federal government's Interagency Coordinating Committee for the Prevention of Underage Drinking, that were held around Washington state. Hundreds of such meetings were convened nationwide on March 28 to educate and empower communities to stop underage drinking.

The Project HANDLE meeting focused its attention on Cambodian refugee families and youth.

With support from 22 state and local organizations, Project HANDLE leaders alerted community members who attended the meeting to new research concerning underage drinking, which is a leading public health problem in Washington.

According to the 2005 Healthy Youth Survey, conducted in schools statewide, nearly one in five 8th graders had used alcohol recently, and one in five 10th graders recently drank five or more drinks in a row.

After watching a video called "This Place" that presented information about underage drinking research and prevention, the youth and parents from Rainier Vista, High Point and other public housing sites who attended the meeting were divided into groups by age, and teachers and mentors explained to them how underage drinking

can lead to bad choices.

"What parents may not realize is that children say that their parents' disapproval of underage drinking is the key reason they have chosen not to drink," said Charles G. Curie, chairman of the ICCPUD and an administrator for the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, a funder of Project HANDLE.

With a passion to help out in his community, Tokeo, a 15-year-old, first-generation Cambodian-American, educates teens about HIV and how it spreads, as well as the dangers of alcohol, drug use and other risky behaviors.

Tokeo first became connected with Project HANDLE in the summer of 2005 through involvement with a cultural dance group at the Rainier Vista Center. Tokeo said that he understands that teens are pressured to drink and knows that because he is their age, they will listen and pay attention to him and other peer educators.

"As a peer educator," he says, "I teach teens how not to get involved (in drinking, drug use and sexual promiscuity) and have seen them hanging out with a good crowd. Everyone helps."

Tokeo, who strives to be a good example to his younger siblings, said he believes that teenagers need family support.

He said that at the meeting, parents were encouraged to know how much alcohol is in their home, to know who drinks it and to realize when it has been consumed. Youth were encouraged not to drink at a young age and to keep themselves safe.

The town hall meeting allowed Tokeo and the community to become better informed about the impact of underage drinking and encouraged them to get involved and set a good example to those around them.

"I am happy Project HANDLE came to me, and that there has been change. I am glad that Project HANDLE is involved, trying to help and take time to see how young teens are acting these days," said Tokeo, who believes that fighting underage drinking needs to be a community effort.



One to grow on

Garden tips for community gardeners

By **ANZA MUENCHOW**
Special to the Voice

With the days getting longer and the temperatures warming up, many gardeners start thinking about their favorite garden fruit. Tomatoes. Getting a good home-grown tomato can be a challenge in our cool summers, but here are some suggestions to help you.

Select a tomato variety that is suited for our climate. Local nurseries, farmers markets and community plant sales will have good Northwest varieties.

Consider buying your tomato starts from the Orca Children's Garden plant sale on May 13 on Ferdinand Street one block west of Rainier Avenue South.

Also try shopping May 6 and 7 at the edible plant sale at Seattle Tilth, located in Wallingford on Meridian Avenue at the Good Shepard Center.

These local growers will have many varieties to choose from, including salad tomatoes, cherry tomatoes and sauce or plum tomatoes. It's fun to grow a few of the Heirloom types, though many require hot summers and less rain than we have.

I have also found a good variety of tomato plants at the Columbia City Farmers market, which is open every Wednesday afternoon from 3 to 7 p.m.

There are two types of tomato vines: the shorter "determinate" type or the longer, "indeterminate" type, which needs to be staked.

I like the indeterminate type because I can harvest about 20 pounds of tomatoes from each plant. The determinates are just small bushes and give only about 10 pounds of fruits.

Some of my favorite indeterminate varieties are Early Girl, Early Cascade, SunGold Cherry and Fantastic.

For a cherry tomato, the SunGold is especially sweet. Sweet One Million is also a great cherry because it gets so big and produces so much fruit. You may have a problem with the skin on cherry tomatoes cracking when you pick them, but both the SunGold and the Sweet One Million are somewhat crack resistant.

The heritage or Heirloom tomato varieties are very popular. These varieties have been passed down through generations for their flavor and simple backyard pro-

duction. Brandywine is an heirloom that produces well in our cool summers. I am trying green Zebra this year. They often do not look like the classic tomato, but very often the classic-looking tomato was bred for storage and color, not for taste.

Always plant your tomatoes in the warmest, sunniest spot in your garden.

They need at least 10 to 12 hours of bright sunlight, often doing better on the south side of a building. Night temperatures need to be above 50 degrees F for the plant to begin its real fruit production.

An exception is the Stupice tomato variety which will set fruit at lower temperatures. I used to plant Stupice to get early tomato production, but its flavor and later production were disappointing.

For soil preparation, work some good compost into the soil before you plant, but don't add extra nitrogen fertilizer.

Nitrogen is good for growing greens, but for a tomato plant, nitrogen encourages too much leaf growth and not enough fruit growth.

Tomato plants don't need a lot of water, just a couple times a week during our dry summers. Use a mulch of weed free compost, like Cedar Grove Compost, around the base of the plant to keep the soil moist and control weeds.

Try to keep water off the leaves of a tomato plant. Just water the soil at the base of the plant. Tomatoes are susceptible to "blight" which is a water-borne infection that turns tomato leaves and stems brown and ruins the fruits. All tomatoes die of this blight in October, but less rainfall and careful watering can keep you harvesting from July until mid October.

Speaking of harvesting, there are many ways to eat your delicious, homegrown tomatoes.

Besides fresh in salads and sandwiches, my favorite way to prepare tomatoes is to roast them.

I fill the bottom of a baking dish with sliced onions and maybe garlic. Then I core the tomatoes, line them up on the onions and drizzle olive oil on them. Bake at 450 degrees for about an hour, until the shoulders are starting to brown.

Yum, my mouth is already watering.
Anza Muenchow is an avid gardener and a volunteer with P-Patch. You can reach her at mahafarm@whidbey.net.

Rally

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as the Statue of Liberty. Her hand-painted sign called for liberty, justice and human rights.

"Choosing an inspiring character gives people a lift," Johnson said. "I'm not an immigrant, but someone back there in my family was, so I came out to stand in solidarity."

Reform of current U.S. immigration laws has generated spirited debate in the United States Congress and in cities and households across America.

Some conservative leaders have called for stringent tactics to restrain entry to the U.S. and to expel undocumented immigrants. Other business and elected leaders have taken a softer stance, citing the economic contribution that so many workers make to our agricultural, hospitality and construction industries.

In December, the House of Representatives passed a bill known as the Sensenbrenner Bill, which contains several provisions to tighten immigration, including the construction of a wall along 700 miles of the U.S. border in Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas.

If signed into law, the bill would make it a felony to be an undocumented resident of the U.S., require all employers to verify the legal status of all their workers and broaden the definition of smuggling to include anyone who aids or transports an undocumented immigrant.

Senate leaders have been debating alternatives, including a bill that would create a guest worker program, allowing the estimated 12 million undocumented workers already in the U.S. to apply for temporary visas after demonstrating past work history, paying a \$2,000 fine, undergoing rigorous background checks, learning English and making good on back taxes.

At press time, the Senate was on a two-week recess, but Senator Arlen Specter, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, had pledged to have legislation ready for debate in the Senate within two weeks of the return from Easter break.

With so many undocumented immigrants in the U.S., including as many as 250,000 in Washington state, the issues are complex and often polarizing.

Last month's rallies mobilized a powerful mix of immigrant, labor, religious and workers' rights groups, indicating that continued debate will likely be vocal.

The Voice

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



Health Notes

A column devoted to your well-being

By NINA GREENBLATT, MD
High Point Medical Teen Clinic

Teenagers often ask whether the habits they have now will really make a difference when they get older.

The answer is yes!

In fact, 65 percent of all deaths in adults are caused by heart disease, cancer and stroke. In many cases, these diseases were preventable.

Many of the behaviors that cause these diseases begin at a young age. For example, if you use tobacco as a teenager, you're more likely to get heart disease, cancer or stroke when you're an adult.

In fact, by avoiding a few risky behaviors you can be healthy and safe well into adulthood. One of the most important things you can do is to avoid using any type of tobacco product. Doctors have the same advice about alcohol and drugs—don't use them. And, don't get into a car with a driver who has been drinking alcohol or using drugs.

Avoid situations where violence or fighting may cause you to be physically injured. If you are sexually active, use condoms to avoid pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

Staying healthy mentally is equally important. Sometimes teenagers find themselves in a bad mood or feel angry or depressed—recognize you're not alone.

Although not every teen experiences mood changes to the same degree, they are common. Sometimes it helps to just catch your breath, count to ten or do something that lets you settle down for a few moments, especially if you're feeling angry or irritable.

Try to look at the situation from the point of view of a wise observer.

Talk to people you trust. Friends can help each other by realizing that they're not alone in their feelings. Talking to parents is important, too. Parents can share

their own experiences dealing with bad moods. Plus, they'll appreciate it if you try to explain how you feel instead of just slamming a door.

Teachers and counselors are often good resources, and a doctor can help sort through questions about development. Keeping feelings inside can make them seem much worse.

High Point Medical Clinic now has a Teen Health Clinic on Thursday evenings. Teens can walk-in from 5 to 7:15 p.m. to see a doctor, nurse or mental health counselor.

High Point Medical Clinic is part of the Puget Sound Neighborhood Health Centers—the same organization that runs the Wellness Centers at Madison and Denny Middle Schools and the Student Health Centers at Chief Sealth and West Seattle High Schools.

With a doctor, a nurse and a counselor on site, teens are able to get services related to sexuality (including birth control, STD prevention and testing, pregnancy testing and care), healthy nutrition, drug or alcohol use, and smoking cessation without a parent or guardian's permission.

The staff can also help with problems related to stress, depression, relationships, family coping and more.

With parent or guardian consent, the clinic will do all health care (except medical procedures) including sports physicals, immunizations, treating acne or other skin issues and acute illnesses (such as colds and flu).

Questions? Feel free to call the High Point Teen Clinic at (206) 461-3915 ext. 111. The clinic is located at 6020 35th Ave. S.W., right next to the new High Point Library. Bus routes #21 and #128 stop near the clinic, call Metro at (206) 553-3000 for specifics.

All visits are confidential and all teens are welcome. The clinic accepts medical coupons and insurance care providers see all people, regardless of ability to pay.

information, contact Emily Paddison at (206) 722-6848 x 102 or by e-mail at Emily@tenantsunion.org.

While the phone hotline is the most intensive way to volunteer at the TU, there are many other ways to get involved. Those who have computer knowledge, fundraising ability and research skills are also welcome to help out. People who can attend mailing parties or provide childcare so parents can attend rallies are especially sought, as are bilingual volunteers.

Last, but not least, the easiest way to be a TU volunteer is to join the Tenants Union as a member. The suggested fee is \$1 per every \$1,000 of annual income. In exchange, members receive the TU Renter's Kit which contains valuable printed materials on landlord/tenant laws, samples of various forms such as leases, deposit checklists, and a Tenants Union Member sign to hang on their door or window.

Members also have the additional service of getting priority "call-backs" when they leave messages about their concerns on the hotline.

Most importantly, members get the satisfaction of being part of a group which has an outstanding record of not only helping tenants in a direct, individual way but also of bringing about social change through education, empowerment, leadership and a commitment to housing justice for all. The Tenants Union has a Web site at <http://www.tenantsunion.org>, and its phone number is (206) 722-6848.

Lynn Sereda is a resident of Capitol Park and a Tenants Union volunteer.

Forum celebrates fathers and diversity

By CJ KLOCOW
Voice reporter

Shawn Cooper is a father of three. At a recent forum, he listened intently to a discussion on fatherhood and clapped vigorously as strong points were made.

Cooper's family lives in the NewHolly area. He said they struggle day to day due to an inconsistent income. A welder by trade, his main goal is to improve the lives of his children and provide them with more opportunities than he had.

"I want to get information and insight from some of the other fathers here," he said. "Growing up for me wasn't all that great, and I want better for my own."

The second annual Fatherhood Forum, held last month in NewHolly, provided entertainment, food, childcare and resources for the group of about 20 fathers who, like Shawn, want to make a bigger impact on the lives of their children.

There was a wide variety of booths set up to provide information about job training, education and housing opportunities.

Derek Wentorf, a child mentor coordinator for Children's Home Society of Washington and one of the event's organizers, said that this year's Fatherhood Forum was focused on diversity and how to improve the father's role in family life, especially in the NewHolly area.

"We're hoping to tap into the different ways that fathers are important," he said.

The keynote speaker, Reverend Ben Mudede, gave the participants a unique point of view on fatherhood as he talked about growing up in rural Africa.

He told how he, as a boy, tried to cross a river but in the middle discovered it had too strong of a current to continue. Just as he was considering turning back, his father came from behind to help him reach the other side.

The experience demonstrated to him the importance of fathers, he said, and positively influences him as a father today.



PHOTO BY CJ KLOCOW
A forum participant gathers material and discusses fatherhood with a service provider.

The forum culminated with a diverse panel of guests who discussed the role of fatherhood in the family and then invited questions from the audience.

When asked what the fathers on the panel like to do with their kids, the crowd laughed at hearing that one member loved to cook dinner and sing with his kids while they danced in the kitchen sink. On a more serious note, a discussion about the challenges of parenting disabled children also took place.

Sean Benning, another one of the organizers and the chair of The Greater Seattle Fatherhood Coalition, hailed the forum as a success.

He said that, although organizers would have liked to see a better turn-out, all involved were definitely touched by the heartfelt discussions. He added that he looks forward to the event next year and expects it to be even better than this year's forum.

"No matter what culture or background you come from, fathers are important," he said.

The event was organized cooperatively by Greater Seattle Fatherhood Coalition, First A.M.E Child and Family Center, Seattle Public Schools Head Start, Neighborhood House, Puget Sound ESD, Men Count and Children's Home Society of Washington.

Community notes

Human trafficking presentation

Every year, almost 20,000 men, women and children are forced into highly abusive labor situations and virtually imprisoned in the United States, including in our own city.

Victims are often identified by Good Samaritans. Refugee Women's Alliance and the International Rescue Committee are holding a workshop that will provide an overview of human trafficking on Tuesday, May 9 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Downtown Seattle Public Library in room 1, level 4.

For more information, contact Carrie Schonwald at (206) 721-0243.

Celebrate Asian heritage

As part of Asian Pacific Island heritage month, a celebration will take place on Sunday, May 7 at noon at Seattle Center's Center House, 305 Harrison St.

The all-day event is free and will showcase The Grateful Crane Ensemble, a Los Angeles-based theater company, whose musical performances pay tribute to Japanese Americans who were interned during World War II.

Additional entertainment will be

provided by locally-based groups from every spectrum of the API community, including the Seattle Matsuri Taiko, Filipino Youth Activities Drill team, Vovinam Lion Dance and Ke Liko A'e O Lei Lehua.

Forum on predatory lending

Predatory lending robs millions of dollars from people and low-income communities every year. Unscrupulous and dishonest lenders often target seniors and communities of color.

The Fremont Public Association will host a public forum on predatory lending on Thursday, May 11, from 6 to 9 p.m. at the New Hope Baptist Church, 124 21st Ave. in Seattle.

The forum will define predatory lending, give tips on recognizing predatory lenders, describe the resources available to victims of these practices and present ideas for action communities can take to change laws that protect predatory lenders.

Light refreshments and child care will be provided. The event is free but pre-registration is requested. Call (206) 694-6786 or send an e-mail to forum@fremontpublic.org.

Training

Continued from front page

ington and Seattle landlord/tenant laws, laws governing subsidized housing and laws about housing discrimination.

The training also includes a session where attendees observe actual eviction cases at the King County Courthouse and a talk on how immigrant rights and housing rights are connected. A comprehensive binder of materials is provided to attendees.

In exchange for this valuable education, those who complete the course commit to staffing the office and phone lines after at least six hours observing other volunteers counsel tenants.

Emily Paddison, the TU staff person who coordinates the hotline training, says that thanks to the training, the TU now has 10 regular volunteers. She added that volunteers provide "a unique and valued perspective to the work of the Tenants Union."

Volunteers representing diverse populations are especially welcomed, she said, and the just-completed spring training reflected this, including a university student, a Low-Income Public Housing high-rise resident and a Seattle Senior Housing Program resident.

Bette Reed, the SSHP resident who attended the training said it seemed to be a "natural complement to and extension of" her many years of advocating for residents in the Seattle Senior Housing Program, including a stint as president of the SSHP Advocates II.

The hotline training will be provided again in the fall. To sign up, or for more

