The PHA Experience



Vol. I No. 3

A Community Newspaper for and about Residents

Summer 2004

Tasker Homes Image Erased in Grays Ferry

If PHA were a for-profit developer, all the homes it is building on the site of the old Tasker Homes would sell in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

That was the opinion of scores among the hundreds who attended the dedication of Phase One of the now renamed Greater Grays Ferry Estates.

The Philadelphia Housing Authority officially opened the first 245 homes ready for occupancy mid-July. These are the first of a complex of 554 homes providing affordable housing on a 40 acre site.

PHA Director Carl Greene hailed the opening as a turning

point for the neighborhood. "Changing the name of this development symbolizes a change in thinking about affordable housing partnerships. Grays Ferry Estates will become a force for unity among all residents of this community."

That came as welcome news to residents of the area who were besieged by a series of shootings that week.

The construction of Greater Grays Ferry Estates represents an investment of \$165 million in federal funding and private investment. The site will offer an opportunity for homeownership as well. Two hundred and fifty homes will

be available for sale, with 125 rental homes available in 15 years for residents to buy.

Twenty five of the 245 homes in Phase One are completely handicap accessible.

Greater Grays Ferry Estates will be a mixed income community where low and moderate income families live together on the same site. Families with incomes as high as 50% of the area's median income (\$34,400 for a family of four) are eligible to rent or buy at the site. That income ceiling may be raised for Phase two homes.

The site now includes new (Cont. on Page 3)



The glee is obvious as these PHA Residents celebrate the new homes at Greater Grays Ferry Estates.



Melvin Johnakin, dressed for success is now as comfortable negotiating contracts with PHA as he once was living in a PHA Development.

Hope VI Helps Launch Resident's New Career

He had lived in public housing all of his life. For many Philadel-phians this is an example of the endless cycle of dependency, a person who is disenfranchised and stays that way forever. For Melvin Johnakin this economic addiction does not exist; in fact his reality is the exact opposite.

As an example of a Philadelphia Housing Authority resident trying to improve his life, Melvin Johnakin has started a business called ELT Schuylkill Falls Landscaping. A federal program called HOPE VI, helped get him started and he has taken good advantage of that start to establish himself as a successful businessman.

Melvin's company provides landscaping and grounds keeping services for PHA developments. In the spring and summer his crews help take care of the leaves, plants and lawns. In the winter, the job is keeping those plants alive, the grounds looking good and the snow removed. He employs 30 people on

a part-time basis.

Melvin says by putting these residents to work he is helping to end the cycle of dependency on public housing.

For now, his future is bright, his business is sound and his hopes and dreams are alive and well.

If you are interested in learning more about HOPE VI business opportunities, please contact Kaget Washington @ (215) 684-3092.

Senior Summit - Summer Sensation

What's that saying? You're not getting older, you're getting...(fill in the blank.) Well, that may be a nice thought but the reality is some of us actually are getting older. But as hundreds of PHA senior residents learned at this year's Senior Summit at Wilson Park in South Philadelphia, getting older isn't necessarily a bad thing.

At least for this particular

weekend seniors got to hang out with their friends and enjoy food and entertainment - and even learn about the benefits open to them. Tenant Support Services director Asia Coney said she had conferred with a higher authority to make sure that the weather was perfect for the event - and it was.

The director of Pennsylvania's PACE (Pharmaceutical Assitance Contract for the Elderly) prescrip-

tion drug program urged anyone 65 or older to enroll. With safety and security always a concern, Arthur Potts with Philadelphia Town Watch encouraged seniors to organize to help "be the eyes and ears" of the community, reporting any suspicious activity. Several private companies also sponsored activities and giveaways.

(Cont. on Page 5)



One of PHA's residents gets her blood pressure checked. This was one of several forms of health screenings offered at the Senior Summit.

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Quality health care is not just for some people. It shouldn't be limited by neighborhood, color or age. Quality health care is for everyone.

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Deborah Williams, Director of the CORA-Neumann program, is joined by PHA's Director of **Customer Services Linda Staley, CORA Executive** VP Jim Harron and CORA Services CEO Dr. Anthony Chunn in a celebration of the first Community Partners grant awarded by PHA.

Community Partners Launches Program

Will Assist Residents With Life and Job Skills

You now have more opportunities to complete your education and gain job and life skills. It's all because of PHA's new Community Partners Program.

PHA Executive Director Carl Greene says Community Partners is a natural outgrowth of the seven-year time limit that PHA has placed on participation in the voucher program. "It would not be fair to tell clients that we expect them to live independently and not provide them with the tools and skills to help themselves," said Greene.

Russell Cole, PHA's coordinator for the program, is excited at the prospects for residents.

"These training opportunities will greatly enhance residents' ability to obtain employment that moves them toward self-sufficiency," Cole says.

"It is a real step toward homeownership, which PHA is emphasizing and encouraging."

Cole says that the best thing about the program is that PHA now has an agency-wide unified training program. He also says the program gives residents concrete goals to work toward, step by step. The process helps residents get their home in order, complete their education, obtain job skills, obtain employment and advance in their jobs so they can become homeowners.

Agencies that provide job-training skills under the Community Partners program will help residents find a job after they complete their training. Every three months, the agencies will follow up with you to see how you're doing.

The Community Partners program's grand opening took place in mid-July at CORA Services Neumann Center in Northeast Philadelphia. CORA-Neumann is one of 13 community partners working with PHA to offer residents in the Housing Choice Voucher program services and training to help them get

Dr. Tony Chunn, CORA Services CEO, said teenagers and young adults would benefit tremendously from the partnership.

"Whether it's helping with GED preparation or homeownership counseling, CORA Services makes a difference in people's lives. We are very excited to work with PHA's clients," said Chunn.

PHA's Russell Cole says it's challenging to teach residents how to balance their interests with the demands of the job market. Longevity on the job is one of the

> (Cont. on Page 5) keys to climbing the ladder and

More Residents Joining Town Watch

Some PHA residents are taking crime-fighting into their own hands. Residents of seven PHA developments have joined PHA Police in Operation Town Watch. The crime prevention program trains neighborhood residents to become the eyes and ears of their community and report activities that threaten the quality of life.

Fairhill Apartments residents (in North Philadelphia) joined the program several years ago. Now, those who live at Queen Lane, West Park, Wilson Park, Raymond Rosen, Liddonfield, Whitehall and the new Greater Grays Ferry Tasker Estates have joined Town Watch, too.

"Police departments cannot eradicate crime. It takes the community working as partners with the police department to stop crime," says PHA Police Chief Richard Zappile.

But the program is more than just community policing according to Zappile. 'Town Watch is somebody saying 'Hey, you can't do that in my neighborhood' and reporting it to the proper authorities, whether it's the police department, sanitation, or abandoned vehicles," he says.

Some Town Watch programs have volunteers who patrol their neighborhoods and report suspicious activities. Zappile says the PHA program promotes "eyes and ears." No one has to leave their apartment, just look out their window and call the police whenever you see something that doesn't look right.

Town Watch does not advocate any physical involvement. But participants are urged to pay attention to details of suspicious activity. Small details to identify people such as a tattoo, earring, beard or clothes may indeed be just what police need to stop a crime.

Elner Dawkins, the Resident Council President at Fairhill Apartments, says she can't put enough emphasis on the importance of Town Watch. She thinks it's especially important that youngsters become involved in the Junior Town Watch program, "because children see things when adults are in the house." Dawkins says there is good participation by kids from the Fairhill neighborhood in the

When you live in a high-rise building, you have a lot of hidden things going on," Dawkins says. Each floor at Fairhill Apartments has a resident who is a floor captain for Town Watch. Floor captains report on information they receive about suspicious activity in the building.

PHA residents who are interested in getting involved in Town Watch should contact their resident leader. Housing Choice Voucher residents can participate by calling (215) 686-1459 to get involved today!



The new homes at Greater Grays Ferry Estates blend in with the surrounding neighborhood and enhance it, along with the lifestyle of its new residents.

Grays Ferry Estates

(Con't from Page 1)

underground utility lines, new streets, and a senior services center open to all income eligible residents of the Grays Ferry community. Also unique is the fact that 18 of the homes included solar power panels which will save those residents \$400-\$500 per year in energy costs.

According to PHA Executive Director Carl R. Greene "We will offer 250 homes for sale at this site. The fist 125 will go on sale next year as part of Phase Two. We anticipate demand for these homes will be high." Greene noted a "Workforce anticipate demand for these homes will be high." Greene noted a "Workforce Training Center will be built on this site. It will house our nationally renowned Pre-apprenticeship Program in the building trades. It will be a big part of our moving tenants to employment program."

PHA began demolishing Tasker Homes, one of its oldest sites, in 2002. The new evelopment is scheduled for completion in Tasker Agency development is scheduled for completion in January 2006.

The new homes feature central air conditioning, wall to wall carpeting, dishwasher, washer/dryer, garbage disposal, off street parking and all new through streets. Many of the homes will have from two to four bedrooms.



Greater Grays Ferry Estates



MTW/Family Services Program Homebuyers Club Workshops

(Please plan to attend all three sessions when registering.)

Workshop 1 Sponsored by Citizen's Bank

Workshops: 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

Strawbridges Building 8th & Market - 13th Floor Community Area

Call to register:

Mr. Gilbert Vega at 215,684,2057 or Ms. Camille Johnson at 215,684,8114 Workshop 2 Sponsored by Wells Fargo Home Mortgage

Workshops: 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.

FSS Center-North 1516 Judson Way, Suite 206 23rd & Jefferson Street

Call to register:

Mr. Gilbert Vega at 215.684,2057 or Ms. Camille Johnson at 215.684,8114

Thursday August 5, 2004

First Time Homeownership Orientation

Learn how to use your Housing Voucher (Section 8) to purchase a home.

Thursday August 12, 2004

Budgeting & Money Management

Learn how to define income and expenses.

Wednesday August 11, 2004

First Time Homeownership Orientation

Learn how to use your Housing Voucher (Section 8) to purchase a home.

Wednesday August 18, 2004

Budgeting & Money Management

Learn how to define income and expenses.

Thursday August 19, 2004

Credit Repair

Learn how to establish, maintain and repair credit.

Wednesday August 25, 2004

Credit Repair

Learn how to establish, maintain and repair credit.



Scattered Site

homeowner

Falls Ridge

Summer Senior Summit Informs and Entertains



Agencies, health care providers and businesses from across Philadelphia handed out a bundle of valuable information to PHA residents attending the Senior Summit.



TSSI Director Asia Coney talks to seniors about spending their golden years by living independently during the formal opening of the Senior Summit at Wilson Park. Celeste DePaula of the Mayor's Office looks on.

Community Partners

(Con't from Page 3)

keys to climbing the ladder and advancing in your position and pay.

So, how do you sign up? MTW residents have a coordinator that's assigned to them by zip code. Call your coordinator for more information.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND THE SERVICES THEY OFFER:

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Orleans Technical Institute-Jewish Employment and Vocational Services

Home Maintenance and Repair Program for Home Owners

Management Environmental Technologies Family Self Sufficiency Center

Job Skills Training Courses **American Community Partners** Job Retention and Placement Assistance

ABO Haven Childcare Provider Training Opportunities Industrialization Corporation: **Hospitality Training**

Culinary Arts (Restaurant and Hotel) Front Desk Management

Guest Services Travel and Tourism Desk Management Professional Healthcare Institute Certified Nursing Assistant Culinary Food Service (Institutional)

Medical Billing Specialist Pharmacy Technician

(Con't from Page 1)

A big theme of the gathering was PHA's move toward assisted living communities. Many seniors who not long ago would have had to move to a nursing home can now remain in their apartments with additional support services. That will be the case at the new senior building at Greater Grays Ferry Estates and at the soon to be totally renovated Germantown House.

Senior Summits have proven to be such a hit with residents that PHA and TSSI will be getting together to hold senior events every month starting this fall. Keep an eye out for announcements of times and locations. Asia Coney says she will do her best to arrange for perfect weather every time.



PHA Executive Director Carl Greene (far right) visits with several residents at one of the information booths set up at Wilson Park for the Senior Summit.

he PHA Experience • Summer

A Message from the Executive Director

We recently witnessed a very inspiring event here at PHA, the graduation of the first class of seniors at the new computer lab at Johnson Homes in North Philadelphia. Many of these residents had never touched a computer before. Now, after 16 short weeks of lessons they're cruising on the Internet, sending e-mail and typing documents like pros.

The graduates, including Commissioner Nellie Reynolds, proudly received awards and words of praise from their instructors. My partner Asia Coney echoed those sentiments and had a message for all residents when she said,



"This is a wonderful opportunity. Don't blow it." Asia said the lab should always be busy with adults and children taking advantage of the resource.

This event was inspiring on several levels. For one, it shows us that no matter your age you can learn and improve yourself. For another, it shows

employees at PHA that building more computer through their dedication they can produce great results for our customers. Finally, it strengthens my resolve to oppose program cuts from Washington that have a direct impact on the services we

We are committed to

labs around the city. The next one is planned for the beautiful new Greater Grays Ferry Estates in South Philadelphia.

Congratulations to the new graduates. We can all learn from your example.

The PHA Experience

The Residents' Newspaper Published by: The Philadelphia Housing Authority

Executive Director Carl R. Greene

Executive Editor Kirk Dorn Editor Anne Martinez Managing Editor Ron Kaplan Resident Writers Cynthia Lofton, Valerie Manlove, Saundra Robinson, Nilsa Rodriguez

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People You Should Know



Damon Roberts,

Community Liaison for the Housing Choice Voucher program, is an attorney with a passion for public service. He came to PHA in April to be part of the HCV Quality Initiative. Damon's goal is to resolve complaints by residents, landlords and public officials in a

timely manner, while avoiding the expense and delay of going to court.

"Working at PHA is a golden opportunity for me. The reason I went to law school in the first place was to be able to have a positive effect on people's quality of life. For me, that's very, very important" he says.

Before coming to PHA, Damon Roberts worked in the City Law Department, the auto insurance rate reduction task force and on environmental protection issues. He has lived in New York, Boston and Washington, but he calls Philly

"I really enjoy being in Philadelphia and being able to make a difference so quickly," Roberts says.

You can contact Damon Roberts at 215-684-4451.



Linda Staley,

Director of Customer Support Services for the Moving To Employment program, believes that now is the best time ever for residents of the Philadelphia Housing Authority.

Moving To Employment (MTE) helps residents get the education, job skills,

social services and case management critical to their success.

Linda has held a variety of positions with PHA in a career spanning more than 18 years. She's very excited because the agency has more services than ever before to help residents improve their lives. Linda says that delivering those services has also improved, thanks to a new computer tracking system.

"We can deliver service from the tot to the elderly," she says. "We're a full service agency with plenty of opportunities for residents to take advantage of and we've been successful at serving residents of all age levels. We're out here giving people real opportunities to sustain themselves in their economic growth."

You can reach Linda Staley at 215-684-5300.



Doug Daniel,

Program Manager of Recertification for the Housing Choice Voucher program, supervises five field offices that service residents in the program.

Doug, who's been with PHA for seven years, believes his number one challenge is maintaining good customer relations. That's

not easy to do when a customer service representative receives an angry call from a resident or a landlord. He says PHA's new Quality Initiative will go a long way toward improving service to residents in the Housing Choice Voucher program.

"It's our job to try to provide the best customer service that we can possibly give them, get the client in and out of the office in the shortest possible time," he says. You can call Doug Daniel at 215-684-4490.



Dorothy Jones

is a Human **Development Specialist** and Section 3 Economic Development Programs Coordinator with PHA. She helps residents get the training and jobs they need to become self-sufficient, notably through PHA's Pre-Apprenticeship Training and Certified Nursing

programs. Dorothy enjoys seeing residents move forward and has a special feeling about being a part of their lives.

Section 3 refers to a part of federal law that says public housing residents should benefit from the economic development activities of public housing authorities.

Dorothy Jones says one of her proudest achievements was seeing a woman who moved through the Housing Choice Voucher program and become a homeowner. She says she's able to see results such as that every day.

"So, when I go home at the end of the day, I'm saying to myself 'Good. Another one bites the dust'," Jones says with a laugh.

Over 900 residents have found employment through the Section 3 program and Dorothy Jones is ready and waiting to help you.

You can call her at 215-684-5300.

Golden Tuesday

For the second year in a row hundreds of people are coming out to enjoy Golden Tuesdays at PHA. The events are sponsored by radio station Power 99/FM. Golden Boy and his cre host a series of these festive events throughout the summer. PHA residents and community members are entertained with music, giveaways, and contests. PHA provides the location, tents, funnel cakes and water ice. at PHA. The events are sponsored by radio station Power 99/FM. Golden Boy and his crew host a series of these festive events throughout the summer. PHA residents and community

You still have time to join the fun. Golden Tuesday is coming to the Raymond Rosen Apartments on August 3rd, the Westpark Apartments on August 10th, and Greater Gray's Ferry Estates (the former Tasker Homes) on August 17th. The events run between at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. See you there.



You Can Become An Entrepreneur

by Valerie Manlove Resident Writer

I was told by a PHA resident that there is a grant program to help residents start businesses. After many repeated attempts to track it down, I finally spoke to a very busy Mr. Virginias Bragg, who is in charge of the PHA Entrepreneurial Program.

Basically this program is designed to help PHA residents get on their way to becoming business owners. I learned that this is a youth-oriented program that serves residents of public housing. Students and young adults attend classes on the Temple University campus. Here they gain exposure to campus life including such things as the cafeteria, mingling with Temple students. The exchanging of ideas with these people is a big plus of such exposure.

Program participants learn about business plans, marketing and business budgeting. The three components of the Entrepreneurial Program are to help PHA tenants develop a business plan, learn how to bid in the PHA bid process and have a mentor in their chosen field. They move on to develop an actual business plan and submit them to the Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation (PCDC).

PCDC is a major organization that supplies small businesses with support and handles their funds. PCDC presents these plans to their revolving loan committee. If the plan is approved, the applicant is loaned the necessary money to start their business.

PCDC administers the funds, which are given to them by PHA, paying the

bills incurred directly with startup. They also control the way the money is spent. This little known program was started by HUD in 1996 in both Los Angeles and Philadelphia to enable assisted housing residents to become business owners with the hope they would do business with their local housing authorities in the areas of construction, maintenance and other related needs.

I learned of one participant who was exposed through this program to campus life at Temple, who changed her aspiration for her future to the extent she became a col-

lege graduate. Program participants often go on to hone their new business skills in their chosen field by bidding successfully on PHA contracts. For example, a resident business owner now supplies PHA with t-shirts with their logo.

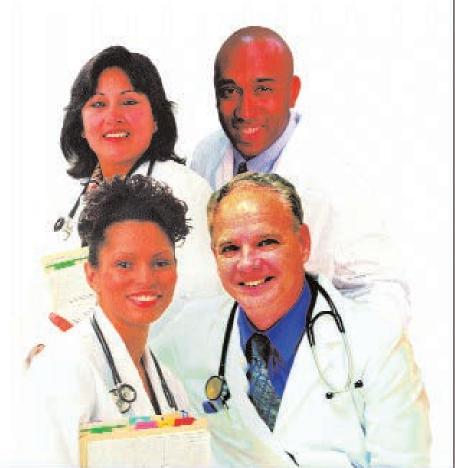
Since the bulk of PHA funds are spent in the areas of construction, maintenance and revitalization, these are the areas that are emphasized in this program.

So give Mr. Virginias Bragg a call at 215-684-4295 and get a jumpstart on your future.

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Livin' Free Is Not All It's Cracked Up To Be

by Valerie Manlove **Resident Writer**

How many people do you think can honestly say "I wish I could stay at home and live off welfare and Section 8 forever?"

Food is essential not only for life, but for good health. If we are to succeed we must eat properly. Many of our low income neighborhoods don't have a decent supermarket, so out of our tiny income, we have to spend at least \$20 to pay someone with a car to take us food shopping.

Since we can't afford to do this whenever we want to, because of lack of money, our food stamps don't buy many fresh fruits and vegetables. Therefore, we're not well nourished and not eating well-balanced meals. We have to stock up once a month, when we can afford a ride to go shopping, on all the unhealthy pre-packaged processed foods. Add to that the resentment coming from the shopper behind you who doesn't have food stamps complaining and making faces because you bought small cheap chuck steaks.

How do you feel when your child's pediatrician constantly frowns and lectures you about your child's weight, which is caused by the high calorie, but long lasting food, which is all you can afford to buy?

When you try to shop healthy and low calorie, all pumped up and gung ho from your pediatrician, how do you feel when you run out of food in 2 weeks time because you bought healthy, nutritional groceries like the doctor told you to? And your child is screaming and crying because you don't have anyone to borrow food and ride money from?

How do you feel when you go into the one lousy market your zip code has to offer and every piece of meat for sale is old and brown? Yeah I know what they say; "we just like livin' for free."

Of course you don't need a car when you're living off welfare. You can walk wherever you need to go. You have two legs don't you? So do your small chil-

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1000 Orthodox Street Philadelphia, PA 19124

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Call Today for more Information

dren. You can all walk everywhere together.

"Just save tokens or token money." Please tell me how a \$150 a month is supposed to stretch to include \$20 for tokens, "just in case." Yeah we like this "livin' free."

Add to that equation a disability that your insurance (welfare insurance) won't cover proper treatment and medicine to cure or diminish the symptoms of your ailment and imagine your happiness because you're 'livin' free."

Your disability won't allow you to leave home to work so, "why don't you work at home?" Just how much did the computer paper sale quote the lowest price as? It won't fit my budget! Typewriters and sewing necessities won't fit within our budget either. Those are my skills but like they say, we like "livin' for free" with no responsibility.

We're not afraid of responsibility and we would welcome the opportunity to prove it. We just need a little help.

Abbottsford Homes has a medical center on site that provides free van transportation to its disabled and off-site patients. Harrison has a van service that takes residents and potential residents to appointments to handle the necessary paper work when moving into or transferring from a unit.

These are essentially good ideas that address a need in our communities, but many of us would like this kind of help when doing other things critical to maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

There are many apartment buildings around town where bus or van transportation is offered by management because there are no supermarkets in the immediate area. This is called an amenity.

We at public housing feel fortunate to have a roof over our heads, but we also have a need to purchase as much food as we can with our small, small food budgets. It is necessary to our survival, because poor food means bad health, starting with overweight residents and going all the way to malnourished residents who cannot find a way to stretch meager budgets to include a car or even tokens. Transportation to "good" supermarkets can be budget breaking to say the least and very undependable when we do manage to arrange it.

Take Penny's story for example, her friend paid \$20 for a hack to take her to a supermarket. Hours later Penny got a frantic call from the woman, saying she was stranded. The hack left her and all her groceries including lots of meat and frozen food in the hot July weather and she had no money left to take a taxi home. Penny was kind enough to tell her friend to take a cab home and Penny would meet her there to pay for the ride.

What would have happened to her month's supply of food for her family if she hadn't been able to reach anyone?

A van service would mean otherwise unavailable, convenient and less costly shopping, safe for her and her neighbors says Penny. "We pay extreme prices in our own neighborhood stores and would like to go to places like Sam's Club, where you get more for your money. Sam's Club takes group memberships and we could buy our needs in bulk with a van service"

There are a few places with similar savings and good values. We don't have access to these savings simply because we don't have transportation. Supermarkets with fresh fruits and good quality, fresh vegetables are likewise often beyond our reach. The 9th Street Italian Market is another great example of a great source for inexpensive good quality food that we just don't have access to.

More for the money. Better quality for the money. Good nutrition. Healthy bodies. Happy stomachs. Sounds good to me.

I guess everybody enjoys a good rags to riches story. I would like to read success stories in every issue of the Experience. I'd also like to read tips on moving and networking through the PHA system, which I feel are a necessity for the average voucher housing and development dwelling consumer.

Maybe with your help and help from PHA we can provide those success stories.

Editor's Note: The PHA Self-Sufficiency Program is available to all non-disabled residents of public housing.

Our Local Churches Provide Guidance in our Communities

by Cynthia Lofton **Resident Writer**

In a community in the Frankford section of Philadelphia, stands the Whitehall Housing Development. Many children, teenagers and adults with much to offer their community live there.

On a corner just a few steps from Whitehall, stands a church 131 years old ready to celebrate its 132nd anniversary coming in September 2004. This church is the St. Thomas United Methodist Church where the Reverend Mary P. Elum is currently serving as the pastor. Reverend Elum is one who lives by faith and

believes in the scripture. One of her favorite passages is Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." As a leader and teacher of many Whitehall Housing Development residents, she has nurtured many to grow and be challenged in the community for service. Reverend Elum's nurturing, encouragement and unfailing love has inspired many residents to move much closer to the place that God is calling them. Her leadership and guidance have enlarged this community's territories towards life, family, jobs, education and church leadership.

Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 9am-

10am, prayer is an essential part of the St. Thomas United Methodist Church. This is where you will learn \circ to pray, survive and overcome obstacles. It's a fact because I'm a part of it, and it worked for me. In the coming issues, I will be interviewing a few residents from that congregation and other congregations in the community and their pastors.

Congratulations to Reverend Mary P. Elum on her fifth year as a pastor in this community and to the body of believers at St. Thomas United Methodist Church.

Easy Recipes and Tips for Busy Moms

One Mom's approach to making more out of less by Cynthia Lofton **Resident Writer**

In our busy lifestyles, we need convenient and healthy ways to feed our families. I want to introduce you to the slow cooker; you might already know them as crock pots. The slow cooker is your friend, especially when you have a busy lifestyle. Using a slow cooker will also save you money on those tight food budgets. There are many cook books available about slow cookers that have lots of great recipes.

My first featured recipe using a slow cooker is a real children's favorite, Barbecued Hot Dogs. In each issue, we will try to feature a recipe or a healthy food tip or both.

Barbecued Hot Dogs

1 cup peach preserves or apricot preserves

4 oz. tomato sauce

1/3 cup vinegar 2 tbsp. honey

2 tbsp. soy sauce

1 tbsp. oil

1 tsp. salt

/tsp. ground ginger

2lbs. turkey hot dogs cut into 1 inch pieces 1 small diced onion (optional)

- 1. Combine all ingredients except hot dogs in slow cooker
- 2. Cover. Cook for 30 minutes on high setting. Add hot dogs. Cook for 4 hours on low setting.
 - 3. Serve over brown rice, jasmine rice, noodles, or as an appetizer.

This recipe is a favorite of most children. There is something about hot dogs, at birthday parties, Phillies games, school, or home for lunch. Children love hot dogs, and barbecue hot dogs especially. I like to use turkey hot dogs, which are very good and also a wise health choice (they contain less fat). However, you can use whatever hot dogs you prefer.



Magician captivates children through storytelling at PHA's Go 4th & Learn Day, where everyone seemed to have a good time.



PHA is helping its residents to close the digital divide by donating used computers to The Children's Project. This nonprofit group based in Norristown takes old computers, rebuilds them and makes them useful again.

Robert Toporek, the founder and president of the nonprofit group, has helped more than 5,000 families and 25,000 children since the program first began over ten years ago. He says people without a computer and basic computer skills are in danger of being cut off from economic opportunity and advancement.

Toporek believes that putting a child on a computer at an early age stimulates learning and development, especially in math and spelling. Kids with computers also learn faster and score higher on standardized tests. So, whether you're rich or poor, a computer can be a great equalizer," he says.

"Many people in the Philadelphia area are without computers", Toporek says, "because it's hard for them to make ends meet, much less buy a computer."

PHA has donated hundreds of computers to The Children's Project, a business that also helps senior citizens, veterans and other individuals. By donating those computers, PHA protects the environment and helps people "get connected."

Last year, Toporek says, his group helped the Philadelphia School District put refurbished computers in every high school. The district also offered a computer-training course to families. Everyone who completed the course received a computer.

PHA residents who need a computer can get one from The Children's Project by writing a letter, at least a page and a half long, explaining why they cannot buy a computer. Toporek says buying a computer from them costs \$185. He realizes, however, that some people can only afford 25 or 50 dollars. "We want every computer to leave our warehouse this summer," Toporek says.

People who receive a computer agree to volunteer two hours of their time at The Children's Project on the day they pick up their machine. They also are required to write a letter 30 days later that tells how the computer helped their family.

Toporek says poor people are off the radar screen in this country. He'd like to get them back on, flying high, with the help of PHA and other businesses that donate to the program.

Low Cost Computers Available | Resident Writers Program A Success

by Ron Kaplan

This issue of The PHA Experience marks a big step for four residents of the Housing Choice Voucher program. Cynthia Lofton, Valerie Manlove, Saundra Robinson and Nilsa Rodriguez are now published newspaper reporters with

their first stories appearing in this issue.

 $T \ h \ e \ s \ e$ women responded to a notice in the first issue of The Experience offering writers' workshop, free of charge to all PHA residents. Cynthia Lofton, Saundra Robinson and classes every

After attend- Valerie Manlove are proud of their new status ing two hour as writers for The PHA Experience. other Friday for the last couple of

months the fruits of their labor are here for all to see. The four women, unknown to each

other before, all shared a desire to express themselves and do something positive with their lives. Everyone at the

newspaper and at PHA thinks they have succeeded. Although this is only a first step, and a small one at that, they have gained the confidence and self reliance to continue.

All four have expressed a desire to continue with the workshops and to

> write for the paper about issues that concern them, which they believe important to their neighbors and all PHA residents. We wish them well.

If you are interested in joining them and possibly starting your

own career in journalism these workshops are open to you too. They meet every other Friday for two hours at the TSSI office at 642 N. Broad Street. Just call Ron Kaplan at 215-755-2000 or Anne Martinez at 215-684-8645.

HOUSING CHOICE SITE OFFICES

Team A

(Jenneane Tillar - Ext. 4-3051)

South Philadelphia Office 1172-1174 South Broad Street Asset Manager - Bret Holden (215) 684-3030

(Fax #215-684-3066)

Zip Codes: 02, 03, 06, 07, 12, 42, 45, 46, 47, 48, 53,

Team B

(Saeema Saunders - Ext. 4-1359)

West Philadelphia Office 5207 Walnut Street Asset Manager - Cynthia Dillard (215) 684-1448 (Fax #215-684-1366)

Zip Codes: 04, 31, 39, 43, 51

Team C (Miriam Stiff - Ext. 4-3065)

Northwest Germantown Office 5538-A Wayne Avenue Asset Manager - Lydia Armstead (215) 684-3050

(Fax #215-684-3055) Zip Codes: 18, 19, 26, 27, 28, 29, 38, 41, 44, 50

Team D

(Glenda F. Wright - Ext. 4-3126)

North Philadelphia Office 642 N. Broad Street Asset Manger - Shane Manila

(215) 684-4376 (Fax #215-684-4966)

Zip Codes: 05, 06, 07, 08, 21, 22, 23, 25, 30, 33, 34, 40

Team E

(Natacha Jimenez - Ext. 4-1559)

Northeast Philadelphia Office 4346 Frankford Avenue Asset Manager - Madeline Rodriquez

(215) 684-1330

(Fax #215-684-1340) Zip Codes: 11, 14, 15, 16, 20, 24, 35, 36, 37, 49, 52, 54

Team F

(Edward Highsmith - Ext. 4-3105)

Project Base 1516 Judson Way., 2nd Floor (23rd and Jefferson) Supervisor - Reginald K. Seabrook (215) 684-3131 (Fax #215-684-8080)

Areas: Blumberg Clients, Scattered Sites, Conventional Sites

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT & SOCIAL SERVICES (CRDSS) DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT (PHA)

YOUTH PROGRAMS:

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM YOUTH ART PROGRAM SUMMER YOUTH CAMP

215-684-4416

Numbers All PHA Residents Should Know

Programs for Senior Citizens

by Nilsa Rodriguez **Resident Writer**

PHA tenants have many programs and services open to them through the Housing Authority and Tenant Support Services, Inc (TSSI).

Tenant Support Services, Incorporated is an organization that works in partnership with the Philadelphia Housing Authority and other businesses and organizations to create programs that support all tenants of public housing towards a path of self-sufficiency and independence.

Here is a list of programs and telephone numbers TSSI provides to help you achieve this goal.

- Adult Basic Education 215-684-8250
- Family Self Sufficiency Program 215-684-8114
- Supportive Housing Program 215-684-8114
- Regional Opportunity Counseling Program -215-684-8114
- Mobile Computer Labs/On Site Computer Labs -215-684-4837
- Tutoring Program 215-684-4295
- On Site Health Clinics 215-684-1180
- Culture Builds Community Program -215-684-4295
- Senior/Disabled Service Coordination Program Grmntwn House - 215-684-1183
- Head Start and Day Care Program 215-684-4821
- Summer Food Program 215-684-1156
- Skills for Life 215-684-4295
- Pre-Apprenticeship in the Construction Trades Program - 215-684-8049

- Housing Operations 215-684-5771
- Maintenance 215-684-4000
- Radio Room 215-684-1921

Other programs to know

- Nursing Assistant Training Room 215-684-8250
- Pharmacy Technicians Training Program -215-684-8250
- Business Development Program 215-684-4295
- Homeownership Program 215-684-8015
- Housing Search Program 215-684-3166
- Economic Family Self-Sufficiency North -215-684-4628
- Family Program 215-684-3166

Youth Programs

- Philly Moves 215-684-4295
- Agri Explore 215-684-1196
- Dare and Great Programs 215-684-1069/5548
- Early Childhood Program Head Start & Day Care - 215-684-4159
- Family Centers Youth Programs 215-684-4295
- Freedom Theatre Cultural Arts Program -215-684-4295
- PHA Law Enforcement Explorers Program -215-684-1069/5548
- Skills for Life 215-684-1196
- Summer Food Service Program 215-684-1164

• Congregate Housing Services Program -215-684-1183

- Senior Citizens and Satellite Centers -215-684-4895
- · Senior and Disabled Service Coordinators -215-684-8782
- Senior Transportation 215-684-1183

You can stop by Tenant Support Services, Inc. offices @ 642 North Broad Street and pick up the Resident Empowerment toward Self-Sufficiency booklets which will give you a description of each program listed and help you to understand how it can apply to you.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT Tuesday, August 3rd

Please join your friends and neighbors in showing your support for a safe and secure community.



Check with your PHA manager to see if an event has been set for your development.

PHA Pre-Apprenticeship Program Open House

WHEN: OCTOBER 2004

WHERE: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER

1905 Vare Avenue (right by the expressway)

Here is your chance to become a skilled union member. Don't miss this opportunity!

Students are instructed in electrical, carpentry, roofing and painting trades. Union entrance exams available to participants.

Program is math intensive. Students learn Algebra, Geometry and Basic Math for union exams.

Qualified applicants must take aptitude & drug tests prior to admission.

For info call: 215.684.8049 or 215.684.8251 The next session will start in January 2005. This 21-week session will end in June 2005. Classes are Monday thru Friday 8:00am to 4:00pm. Applications will be accepted in October 2004.

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- 1. Resident of the Philadelphia Housing Authority
 - Section 8/Housing Choice
 - Conventional Housing
 - Scattered Site
- 2. Positive attitude
- 3. Physically capable of lifting up to 60lbs
- 4. 18yrs, of age or older, or 18 before the end of the cycle
- 5. A high school diploma or GED is required, (If applicants have neither one, before they can be accepted into the program they must have taken steps toward obtaining one.)

The PHA Experience • Summer 2004

www.pha.phila.gov

Frankie Brown is a middleweight boxer, standing six feet and weighing in at 165 pounds, who won the title in March. The Cadet Class is for competitors who are 15 and 16 years old. Brown would like to become a professional boxer. He's following in the footsteps of other well-known Philly fighters by competing in the Golden Gloves and other amateur contests.

Kenny Mason, Brown's trainer at the Shepard Recreation Center, says Frankie is a fast learner and has a lot of courage. In the Philadelphia Golden Gloves championship bout, Mason wanted to pull Brown from the card when he learned that Frankie was facing a guy with over 90 fights under his belt. But Frankie was determined. The fight went on and Brown defeated Bear Richardson for the crown.

Brown says boxing competitively gives him the chance to travel and meet people. More importantly, Brown says boxing teaches him discipline, values and respect. Mason, who boxed on the All Army Team and has won Golden Gloves and Junior Olympic Championships, says it takes a lot of discipline to become a good boxer. "Other sports you can get away with things that you cannot get away with in boxing," Mason says. "Frankie will definitely be able to go pro. He's one of the hardest working kids in there."

Nadine Johnson, Brown's mother, wants her son to keep his eyes on another prize, his education. "I cannot stress enough the importance of an education. Hopefully, once you get that big "D", the diploma, you can even look at college," she says.



Frankie Browne and Nadine Johnson are all smiles as they show Frankie's trophies and medals.

Johnson says her son has to remember that there is life after boxing, and he'll need something to do whenever he leaves the ring. If Frankie doesn't go to college, she says, he can go to a trade school since he's good with his hands. The champ agrees and adds that he's also interested in real estate.

Johnson says boxing has given her son something else: male role models to mentor him. Friends and family also come to watch his bouts and cheer him on. Frankie believes that overcoming and beating challenges and problems will only make him stronger. Our young champion says, "I plan to be great at whatever I do, whatever that is in the future, no matter what comes my way." Now there's a winning attitude!

Still Time to Take Advantage of Summer Food Program

PHA residents under the age of 18 and children who live in surrounding neighborhoods still have plenty of time to take part in the Summer Food Program.

Children ages 18 and under receive free breakfast and lunch through Friday, August 27th. The program operates Monday thru Friday from 8am to 2pm at 28 PHA sites across Philadelphia.

Any child who is a member of a household receiving food stamps or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits is automatically eligible to receive free meal benefits at program sites.

Last year, PHA's Summer Food Service Program provided an average weekly total of 14,000 breakfasts and 18,000 lunches at all of its sites.

People who want more information about participating in the program can contact PHA at (215) 684-1164.

PHA Senior Programs Special Committee Meetings and Special Events Schedules 2004 (Dates subject to change)

August 27, 2004

Trip: PHA Senior Day 04 Location: Atlantic City Time: Time to be announced

September 10, 2004

Canvass: Senior Programs Community Canvass Day 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

September 17, 2004

Event: Senior Summit
Location: Abbottsford
Time: Time to be announced

September 18, 2004

Event: Senior Summit
Location: Abbottsford
Time: Time to be announced

October 22, 2004

Event: Senior Day Location: Liddonfield Senior Center Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

November 6, 2004

Event: Senior Black & White Ball (formal) Wilson Park 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

November 17, 2004

Event: Ain't Misbehavin' Location: Bucks County Time: 2:00PM

November 19, 2004

Event: Senior Day Location: Gladys B. Jacobs Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

November 30, 2004

Event: Christmas
Decoration Party
Location: Wilson Park
(2504 & 2508)
Time: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

November 30 and December 1,2,3, 2004

Event: Christmas Tree Lighting & Christmas Bazaar Location: TBD Time: TBD

December 11, 2004

Event: Senior Holiday Party Location: Blumberg Time: 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Computer classes are scheduled every Tuesday and Thursday from 8AM - 9AM commencing April 1,

2004

Reading classes are scheduled every Friday from 8AM - 9AM commencing April 2, 2004.

Senior Program's staff meetings are held every other Wednesday from 8AM - 9AM.

Goal Five Senior Program's staff meetings are held every other Wednesday from 1PM - 3PM.

Pinochle game held at Blumberg every Monday from 12:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Every Tuesday and Thursday during May and continuing into June exercise walk

Off Drugs and Onto Higher Ground

by Saundra Robinson Resident Writer

For many years I've started my day the same way, not doing what I aspire to do, but doing what I'm driven to do by my many addictions. One moment I would be peeking through the hole in the shade of my window, so paranoid looking out to see who was looking in and the next minute pacing the floor wondering what to do about the addictions driving me. I thought I wanted a drink or two, to bring me down from all the other drugs I had already taken. Then I thought I wanted someone, anyone to have sex with because of the loneliness and others times I just wanted to die because my life was so out of control.

I thought of the possibility of going to an Alcohol Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous meeting, then I thought those meetings aren't anonymous at all; I don't want everyone to know my issues. Before long my possibilities became impossibilities and I became more and more discouraged by my thoughts. Then I thought of reaching out to my neighbors, yeah, I thought they'd help me, but after thinking that possibility through, I thought of all the gossip that might spread from that shortsighted plea for help.

No one knows about my addictions, I've hidden them successfully and wear them well, I guess. I'm not as bad as others I've heard about, the ones who wash their hands all day or are afraid to answer a ringing phone, I tell myself. What a joke, all these thoughts amount to nothing year after year. Who can I tell that I have sex at least six times a day with six different partners? Or that I drink myself into next week without even knowing what has happened. Who wants to hear another story about a crack addict who needs help? Who will listen to me as I tell my secrets and keep them secrets? I've heard of places that do, but why can't I find one? Where are they located? What are the costs of these places? When will they see me? Is there a waiting list? I'm afraid, I need Help and I need it now.

Who are you when no one's looking? Are you among the many people who pretend to live normal lives in front of others, but are really burdened down with secret addictions. Are your issues dying for attention? I found help and now I help others find the help they need. There is help for you and it's right under your nose. We are your faith based community leaders, who believe everybody's business is nobody's business. We offer a wide variety of services. We all don't function the same way but if one can't meet your need maybe another can. We represent Christ in all we do. We serve a hot or cold meal; we give spiritual advice one on one. Some of us have door-to-door van service to bring you to and from church; some of us provide good up to date clothing for the needy, referral services, and anonymous phone lines. We are good listeners, loving and patient. We will walk you through what ever process it takes to make you whole again as long as you make an effort. We are not full of book knowledge, we wear the shoes of deliverance; in other words we've been there and done it.

My personal struggle was sexual addictions, so nothing you might want to talk about concerning sex would be strange to me. The Faith based ministries listed below desire to come to your housing development or community housing. If this would be of interest to you call the PHA Experience or write them and let them know you would like to make a direct connection with these Ministries through

Pastor Diane Rodgers
Reconciliation Church of the First Born
1617 W. Cumberland Street
(215) 726-5103
An absolutely loving environment,
Van service, Private Addictions counseling,
meals and clothing. (No cost)

Da' Bride of Christ Ministries Private Phone counseling. Teaching, Dance ministry, and plays (no cost) P.O.Box 894 Havertown Pa. 19083 (215) 205-9891

Rock Family Worship Center Establishing van service, a hot or cold meal, Spiritual advice, dance ministry, referral service and clothing. (No cost) 6624 Haverford Ave. Phila, Pa 19151 (215) 747-7350

The Good Steward Ministries
Teaches resume writing and other needed
skills to prepare you for work.
(No cost)
1901 Judson Street Unit 113

Phila, Pa. 19121

Women Focused on Higher Places 1846 Pennington Rd Phila, PA 19151 Spiritual poetry and teaching. (No cost) PHA or you can call the ones listed below directly and maintain your anonymity. *Editor's Notes:*

1) Saundra Robinson is a PHA resident who pulled herself out of a life of despair and now helps others. She is also a published author. Her book From Prostitution To Purity was published by Borders Books and is available at most major bookstores, or you can get it from her directly by calling 215-477-7397.

2) Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) was founded in 1935 and currently serves over 2 million members in the United States. These people who once drank to excess finally acknowledged that they could not handle alcohol, and now live a new way of life without it. For more information contact AA; they are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week @ (215) 923-7900 or visit their web site www.sepennaa.org. AA also refers callers to sister organizations for other types of addictions.



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Phone: 215-225-1019 Fax: 215-221-5933 eleanorawf@hotmail.com



How to Get Your Personal Experience Into Your Paper

Each of our residents, all of whom are our readers, are invited to tell us about you or your family's "Experience" as a tenant of the Philadelphia Housing Authority.

It's simple and easy. Reach out to your Resident Council or your Asset Managers and tell them about it. We'll send out a photographer to take your picture and follow up with an additional interview and you'll probably be reading about yourself in the next issue of the PHA Experience.

If you'd like to learn more about the newspaper business, you can also ask about the opportunities to attend journalism classes which the Experience staff will conduct.

It's a golden opportunity, so reach out. It's easier than you think! Call **215-684-8645** or e-mail: *newsletter@pha.phila.gov*.



BLUMBERG ONE STOP SHOP Hours: Monday- Friday 9:AM-5:PM

Humbert Development 2013 Jefferson sincel Philadelphia, PA 19121



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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURSDAY
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Hours: Monday - Friday 7:00 am to 6:00 pm - Saturday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm



15

BLUMBERG ONE STOP SHOP Hours: Monday- Friday 9:AM-5:PM

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Soptombor 2004

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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURSDAY
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