

Neighbor to Neighbor

Useful News from the Vancouver Housing Authority
and the Clark County Resident Council

April 2011
Volume 11 Issue 2

Public Housing Goes Smoke Free

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As of July 1, 2011 all Public Housing and Cougar home properties will go “smoke free”. This means that residents will no longer be allowed to smoke inside their units or within 10 feet of the building. Since January 1, 2011 the senior housing complexes have been smoke free. These residents are not allowed to smoke inside the units, in common areas, or within 25 feet of the building.

We hope you will support this policy which will benefit our entire community. We will be mailing the policy to residents in the near future. It is also available for review on our website at www.vhausea.com.

One reason for this policy is to protect the health of smokers and non-smokers. It is well-documented that inhaling tobacco smoke is hazardous to everyone’s health. Children and babies exposed to secondhand smoke have more ear infections and breathing problems like asthma and bronchitis. They also miss more days of school every year than those not exposed. Even pets are harmed by secondhand smoke.

The other reason for this policy is to protect your home. House fires are often caused by smoking. Also, cigarette smoke stains the walls and other surfaces, which costs a lot to fix.

This does not mean you cannot smoke if you live in housing. It just means you may only smoke in designated areas. People who violate this policy may put their—and their families’—tenancy with us in jeopardy.

Information from Clark County Public Health and Smoke Free Housing Project NW

**Want to quit tobacco?
See page 2 for resources and information.**

Vancouver Housing Authority
694-2501

RISE & STARS Community Center
737-2950

VHA Maintenance
694-4506

Visit VHA on the web @
www.vhausea.com

Meet the New Resident Commissioner

ALBERT BOSTON-EL was appointed Resident Commissioner by Mayor Tim Leavitt in February 2011. Mr. Boston-EL is President and Chief Executive Officer of Boston-El Enterprises, LLC, and has been employed in various occupations throughout his life, especially Chief Chef, and served in the US Army receiving an Honorable Discharge. Mr. Boston-EL has worked with troubled children involved with gangs, juvenile and adult offenders, and does motivational speaking to groups or individuals sharing his experiences on obtaining success. Mr. Boston-EL attended Hutchinson Community College and the University of Phoenix pursuing a degree in Business Management. In 2007, Mr. Boston-EL relocated to Vancouver, Washington from Wichita, Kansas, and is currently participating with Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring young men.

**Get the maximum amount....and then:
What to do with that big tax refund?**

Did you know that 20 – 25% of eligible workers do not claim the Earned Income Tax Credit available to them? That means that millions of dollars are not finding their way to the pockets of working families and individuals who have earned that money. As a result they are going without the income boost they could be getting to help them care for their families. Don't be one of those people!

Take advantage of free tax assistance! Call the Community Housing Resource Center (CHRC) to schedule a FREE tax filing appointment.

Before you spend your tax refund – consider the services that are offered at the Community Housing Resource Center. One option is to direct deposit your refund into a savings account until you have the opportunity to work on resolving credit and debt issues. Don't have a savings account? We can help you!

Do yourself a favor and attend one of CHRC's free educational offerings; Get the Facts" workshop, CreditSmart®, a financial education class, or a first-time homebuyer class.

There is no obligation to attend any of these classes, however. The most important step is to make an appointment to file your tax return with assistance from a trained volunteer at NO CHARGE. This service is available February 18th through April 18th, so pick up the phone today! **360-690-4496, x 103.**



**PARENTS:
DON'T MISS
THIS!!**

Safe Communities Task Force presents the
3rd Annual Parent Conference

“What Kids Know and Parents Wish They Did”

A FREE workshop for parents and guardians

Saturday, May 21, 2011 9:00 AM—4:30 PM
Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Washington—
OK Clubhouse and Teen Center
4040 Plomondon Road
Vancouver, WA 98661

Workshops offered:

- Drugs/Alcohol: What are kids using and seeing**
- Child Exploitation**
- Talking with Your Kids**
- Gang Involvement: What to look for**
- Internet Safety/Bullying**

Interpreters available in Spanish and Russian
Complimentary lunch provided

**To register call Paula Deans at Clark County Juvenile Court at
360-397-2201 x 5826
between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM Monday—Friday
Hosted by: Safe Communities Task Force**

**Tobacco Cessation
Support Group**

**Are you thinking of curbing or
quitting your habit?**

Quitting tobacco is hard, but You CAN do it! We can help you get started! Join others who are motivated to quit smoking for group support meetings that can help you reach your goal. Tackle all sides of the addiction with information about medical treatment along with behavioral and social support.

**Every Thursday at 5:30 PM
RISE & STARS Community
Center, 500 Omaha Way
For more information call Eric
Scott @ 360-566-4425.**

**Stop Smoking Now!
Tobacco Quit Line**

**Toll-free at 1-800-784-8669
QUITLINE.COM**

The Washington State Tobacco Quit Line can provide you with the support you need to be successful. You'll talk with a trained quit coach who will help you assess your situation and develop your own plan to quit. When you call the Tobacco Quit Line, a tobacco cessation specialist has the information and help you need to give up tobacco. The Quit Line is open 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

VHA RISE & STARS COMMUNITY CENTER YOUTH PROGRAM

500 OMAHA WAY, VANCOUVER, WA 98661 737-2950

Activities for Youth in grades K - 12

Open to youth living in VHA Section 8 and Low Rent housing. Parents must come in and complete a registration form before their child can attend activities. For information and to register call 737-2950 between noon and 5:00 PM. Permission slips required for all field trips.

Please note: In compliance with state law, some children will be required to use booster seats or car seats with harnesses when on field trips in our van. Due to the limited number of seats available, children may not be able to go on every trip they want to.

Monday—Friday

Grade K - 5, 3:00—5:30 PM

Grade 6 - 12, 6:00—8:00 PM

**Homework help, crafts, games, snacks, classes, clubs,
computers and more!**

**Call Prudence at 992-0232 or come by and fill out a
registration form today!**

Spring and Summer Lawn Care

Spring is here! The grass is growing again, and it's time to plan for weekly lawn mowing. Here are a few tips for keeping your grass healthy and your lawn looking good.

Mowing

Plan to mow your grass once a week during the summer months. Set your mower height so that your grass is about 2 inches long after you mow it. If you mow weekly, you can leave the grass clippings on the lawn for mulch; this adds nutrients and help keep moisture in the ground. It also helps with weed control. Mowing weekly makes mowing easier and there isn't all that grass to dispose of.

Watering

Your grass needs one inch of water per week: approximately 20 minutes with a lawn sprinkler. Water in early morning or late evening so the water gets to the roots. Watering when the sun is out or the temperature is warm is a waste because the water may evaporate before it gets to the roots.

Weeding

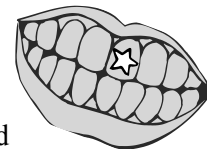
Keeping your flower beds free of weeds makes your yard look better. Even if you don't have flowers or shrubs, weeding helps add definition to your yard. The best way to weed flower bed areas is by using a simple garden hoe.

Free Adult Dental Screenings

**Graduating Dental Hygiene
students looking for patients
for their final practical exam
in June 2011.**

Who may qualify:

- People who have not had their teeth cleaned in at least **5 years**
- People with a history of tartar build up
- People who have very few obvious cavities – large holes in their teeth
- People who have most of their natural teeth
- People who are in relatively good health
- People comfortable in a dental chair and dental setting
- People at least 18 years old



What is required of the patient:

- Must be available on the exam date in late June 2011
- Must be available for multiple appointments prior to June 2011
- Must be able to recline for an extended amount of time
- Must be able to keep their mouth open for an extended amount of time

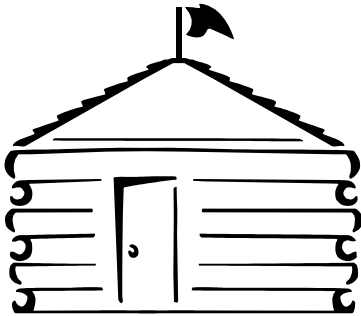
Saturday, April 9th, 11:00 – 2:00
RISE & STARS Community Center
For more information call 360-772-9261 or email
2011DHBP@gmail.com

Summer Camp— Camp Rosenbaum July 24th—29th

Camp for Housing Authority resident youth ages 9 1/2 to 11. A free weeklong sleep-away camp at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Oregon.

Space is limited. Apply early: fill out an application at the RISE & STARS Community Center at 500 Omaha Way. Applications are due May 13th.

Call Prudence at 992-0232 for more information



VHA Board Of
Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, April 27th,
10:00 AM
2500 Main Street,
Vancouver
*Meetings are open to the
public*

Plant & Flower Sale

A beautiful variety of
houseplants, herbs,
vegetables and flowers
for your garden.

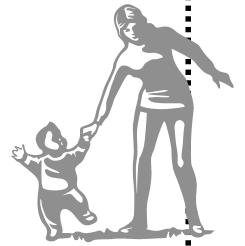
500 Omaha Way
Saturday, May 7th
10:00 AM—3:00 PM

Moms, Dads and other
family caregivers:
DROP IN and

PLAY...

SHARE...

DISCOVER!



Play & Learn

A fun, interactive way to
spend time with your 0-5
year old.

Thursday mornings,
10 AM to Noon
VHA RISE & STARS
Community Center
500 Omaha Way

For more information
call Sharon @ 992-0205.

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
VANCOUVER WA
PERMIT NO. 609

Vancouver Housing Authority
RISE & STARS Community Center
500 Omaha Way
Vancouver, WA 98661
Return Service Requested
360-737-2950