



# Journal

## CITY HARVEST BRINGS PRODUCE TO BRONX RESIDENTS

The parking lot adjacent to the Classic Community Center at Melrose Houses in the Bronx isn't usually associated with fresh cabbage, onions, potatoes, string beans, and bananas, but on the second Saturday and fourth Wednesday of each month, that's where more than 1,000 New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents line up for their fruits and veggies, courtesy of the nonprofit organization City Harvest's Mobile Market. The goal of the Mobile Markets is to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetable in low-income communities by bringing food directly to the people who need it—and by all accounts the collaboration between City Harvest and NYCHA has been a stunning success. Did I mention that the food is free?

"We're very happy with the turnout," said City Harvest's Director of Agency Relations Val Traore, referring to the first two Mobile Markets at Melrose, held on October 9th and 27th. Ms. Traore explained that a full 63% of the 619 households from Melrose, Jackson and Morrisania Air Rights who registered for the program participated. Altogether, these 619 families represent 2,166 individuals.

"NYCHA residents really love it," she continued. "The thing we get asked a lot is, 'Are you going to stay?'"

The program is about more than just giving away fresh produce. City Harvest also helps residents with informational handouts on the storage and handling of the food. Plus, there is a nutritionist and a chef at each market. Recipes handed out so far have included cabbage pot stew, double baked potatoes and smoothies.

Each family that registers receives a key tag with a bar code indicating the number of pounds of food that family is eligible to receive. The resident is free to peruse the market and make his or her own selections.

City Harvest provides the staff, tables, tents, and of course the produce, which is donated to the organization by a variety of sources including farmers, grocers, restaurants, corporate cafeterias and manufacturers. NYCHA provides the space.

"So far," said Ms. Traore proudly, in the two markets we've held at Melrose, we've distributed a total of 35,249 pounds of produce. That equates to 105,747 servings of fruits and vegetables. The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends 150 servings of fruits and vegetables per person per month. That means we've provided 50% of the monthly allotment of fruits and vegetables

to the participating residents."

The Resident Association Presidents from each of the three developments were all enthusiastic about the program and all three volunteer their services. "I didn't think that many people would show up," said Melrose Resident Association President Denise Roberts. "The food is great. The residents really love it."

"It's going very well. It's well organized," said Morrisania Air Rights Resident Association President Bernice King. Ms. King estimated that about 15 to 20 NYCHA residents from the three developments volunteer, assisting the staff from City Harvest. "We keep the lines moving and orderly, hand out bags and food."

Jackson Houses Resident Association President Daniel Barber Walker added, "The people were all happy and gracious. City Harvest does good work. At the end (Continued on page 3)

## Domestic Violence Borough Conferences "Through The Eyes Of Children"



Speakers at the Domestic Violence Conference at Rutgers Houses in Manhattan included Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence Research Coordinator Christina Alex (left) and NYCHA General Manager Douglas Apple.

By Eileen Elliott

For the third year in a row the New York City Housing Authority's (NYCHA's) Social Services Department has brought information on the serious topic of domestic violence directly to Housing Authority residents in each of the five boroughs. Nearly 800 NYCHA resident leaders, residents and staff attended the combination conferences/resource fairs held in NYCHA community centers during the week of October 25th. Entitled "Through The Eyes Of Children," the conferences focused on the effects of domestic violence on children who witness it.

Keynote speakers featured in each borough included representatives from the Children's Aid Society, the Bronx and Richmond County District Attorneys' Offices, the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, and the nonprofit organization, Safe Space. Each of the conferences concluded with the same dramatic presentation by the talented young performers from the NiteStar Program of St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital, entitled "Reality Show." Manhattan Social Services

Deputy Administrator Laurie Archer welcomed the guests and provided the introductory remarks at the final conference of the week, held on October 29th at the Rutgers Community Center on Manhattan's Lower East Side. "You often hear about the adult victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, but what about the children who witness it? Clear evidence shows that children who witness domestic violence may become perpetrators themselves." (Continued on page 5)



MAKING A DIFFERENCE Seniors from 16 NYCHA Senior Centers in Brooklyn contributed gifts to the seniors at the Bishop Henry B. Hucles Nursing Home in Bedford-Stuyvesant for the Brooklyn Borough Department of Community Operations' first, "Let's Make A Difference Day," on October 28th. Over 100 gifts made by the seniors included flower baskets, jewelry boxes, crocheted hats and scarfs, and most prized of all knit and crocheted lap blankets. The NYCHA Senior Chorus with Director Carrie Payne (at right) contributed the entertainment.

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Message From The Mayor

\$25 Million Initiative To Build New Playgrounds For New York City's Public Schools



It was my pleasure to join Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein, Vice Chair of the Fund for Public Schools Caroline Kennedy, and Mid-Atlantic Regional Director of the Trust for Public Land Rose Harvey last month to announce a new partnership between the New York City Department of Education (DOE) and the Trust for Public Land (TPL) that will construct

25 new playgrounds at public schools across the City over the next five years. The overall cost of this public-private partnership is \$25 million, one-third of which will be raised through private fundraising efforts by TPL, and the remainder will be paid by DOE. The playgrounds will be open to the general public after school is dismissed each day.

Having quality recreational space is an important part of our children's overall education, health and physical well-being. These new playgrounds will enhance the school day for children by providing a clean and safe place for recreation, while also making the surrounding neighborhoods more livable. I would like to thank the Trust for Public Land for their commitment to creating playgrounds and to improving our open spaces where it is needed most.

The 25 schools that will receive new playgrounds as a result of this initiative will be identified as potential participants based first on need. TPL's efforts are focused on low-income, high-density neighborhoods, which are underserved in terms of open recreational space. Additional selection criteria include the school's need for new playground facilities, the availability of land near school buildings, the size of the school's student body, and the possibility of a strong community partnership for design and stewardship of the parks. The schools that have thus far been selected to participate in this initiative are P.S. 180 in Harlem and JHS 220 in Borough Park, Brooklyn. Both will have new playgrounds in the Fall of 2005.

TPL will manage the design and construction of the playgrounds as part of its City Spaces Program. Established in 1996, City Spaces creates new community playgrounds in city neighborhoods underserved in terms of recreational space. The program is dedicated to providing permanent, community-managed recreation spaces. City Spaces is a public-private partnership, involving the TPL, DOE and Parks & Recreation and local organizations. TPL has already successfully created sixteen community playgrounds throughout New York City and Newark, N.J.

As with all City Spaces projects, designs will provide children with a connection to nature by including elements such as a garden, an open field, or a rest area shaded by trees. City Spaces projects use a participatory design process at each school that includes soliciting input from students, teachers, parents, and the larger community. Students provide direct input and survey the school and local community to collect additional input. Teachers will use classroom activities in a variety of subject areas to incorporate the playground project into the curriculum. Following community sessions where the school and local communities are invited to comment on designs, students will have the opportunity to vote on their favorite design. At the conclusion of the design process, the principal and Local Instructional Superintendent will have final approval of the design.

The new playgrounds created through this initiative will provide recreational opportunities for students and area residents. Surrounding communities and organizations will partner with the TPL to provide educational and recreational activities at the playgrounds during non-school hours.

The Trust for Public Land is a national nonprofit land conservation organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and other natural places, ensuring livable communities for generations to come. The Parks for People Initiative of the Trust for Public Land works in cities across America to ensure that everyone—in particular every child—enjoys close-to-home access to a park, playground, or natural area. To accomplish this vision in New York City, the Trust for Public Land works with communities to create and sustain parks, especially in the City's neediest neighborhoods.

Michael R. Bloomberg

Bed Bugs Are Back!



They drink blood and feed at night. Any guesses? Here's a hint, "Sleep tight. Don't let the \_\_\_\_\_ bite." That's right, bed bugs are back. Not only have they resurfaced around the country, they have also recently been found in a few New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) apartments. But don't worry! NYCHA's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) team and borough Pest Control units are on the case.

How do you know if you have bed bugs? If you wake up with small red bites, usually around the face, neck, hands and arms, then it's definitely a possibility. The bites can be painless or accompanied by small red welts and itching. Adult bed bugs are reddish brown in color, oval shaped and from 1/4 to 5/8ths of an inch long. Nymphs (young bed bugs) are smaller and yellowish, unless they have just fed.

Although bed bugs bite, they do not transmit disease. However they can become a nuisance and difficult to control without pest control expertise and vigilance on the part of residents.

Bed bugs are transported into apartments on clothing, in luggage, or in furniture or bedding. Once inside a home, they hide in cracks and crevices, usually close to where the host sleeps. Hiding places might include seams or buttons in mattresses, the coils of bedsprings, cracks in bed frames, picture frames, or loose wallpaper.

To prevent infestations of bed bugs:

- Examine beds and furniture for insects regularly;
— Do not bring used mattresses and furniture into your apartments;

- Clean and vacuum mattresses, bedding, carpets and furniture regularly and discard vacuum bags immediately;
— Use plastic covers over mattresses and sleeping chairs; and
— Remove any clothes from the floor to prevent insects from harboring in clothing.

If you find you do have bed bugs...please contact your development's Management Office immediately, so that your Housing Assistant can fill out a work ticket.

Treatment for bed bugs will be done in three phases:

- 1.) First you will be advised to vacuum and wash bedding and all areas that may contain the bed bugs. Once again, after vacuuming, the vacuum bag should be removed from the apartment. If mattresses are too infested it may be best just to discard them. Affected clothes should be placed in plastic bags until washed, then washed in hot water.
2.) Next, NYCHA's Integrated Pest Management team will vacuum and disinfect mattresses and areas of infestation. The NYCHA Exterminator will then thoroughly treat all visibly affected areas and the complete apartment. Special attention will be given to the beds, the edge of the carpets, closets and any other areas where bed bugs are hiding.
3.) The Housing Exterminator will return to the apartment within ten days. S/he will then apply a follow-up treatment. The NYCHA Exterminator will also inform the residents if an additional treatment is necessary.

October 1st - May 31st
Minimum Indoor Temperature
From 6AM to 10PM
68 degrees Fahrenheit
whenever the outdoor temperature is below 55 degrees.
From 10PM to 6AM
55 degrees Fahrenheit
whenever the outdoor temperature falls below 40 degrees.

SPEAK OUT AGAINST FRAUD AND CORRUPTION!
If you or anyone in your family is aware of any fraud or corruption committed against the New York City Housing Authority ("NYCHA") by any NYCHA employee, contractor, vendor, or resident, we urge you to call the NYCHA Inspector General ("IG") at 212-306-3355 or the Department of Investigation ("DOI") at 212-3-NYC-DOI or 212-825-5959.
The IG and DOI rely on NYCHA employees, residents and people who do business with NYCHA, and the public at large to report fraudulent and corrupt activity they see or hear.

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Michael R. Bloomberg...Mayor
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*Message From The Chairman***The Fiscal Year 2005 Annual Plan and Five Year Plan Have Been Submitted to HUD**

**F**or the seventh consecutive year, NYCHA executive staff and residents have worked together to complete the U.S. Department of Housing and Development (HUD)-required Annual Plan, which was submitted to HUD on October 15th. The 54 members of the Resident Advisory Board (RAB) — 45 elected public housing resident leaders and nine Section 8 Leased Housing residents —

worked together with NYCHA over the course of 15 meetings, addressing the most pressing issues facing the Authority. NYCHA is grateful for the time, thoughtful ideas, proposals and suggestions of the RAB.

The Authority also held five town hall meetings in June and July ending with a public hearing at New York City College of Technology in downtown Brooklyn on July 15th. In addition, written comments on the draft plans were submitted by residents and other interested parties through the post office box that NYCHA maintained during the review period.

NYCHA's Plan for 2005 is a comprehensive guide to policies, programs, operations, and strategies for meeting the needs and goals of residents. There are two parts to the Plan: the 5 Year Plan, which each public housing authority submits to HUD once every fifth fiscal year, and the Annual Plan, which is submitted to HUD every year. Let me mention some of the most important aspects of the Plans.

**Increasing New York City's Stock of Affordable Housing**

The Plan describes NYCHA's close collaboration with the City's other housing agencies, the Department of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD) and the New York City Housing Development Corporation (HDC), to carry out Mayor Bloomberg's \$3 billion New Housing Marketplace Plan to produce and preserve 65,000 units of affordable housing over the next four years. NYCHA has identified three properties: University Macombs Apartments in the Bronx, Brook Willis Apartments in the Bronx and Fabria Houses in Manhattan, for redevelopment as affordable housing because the properties were vacant, unused or underdeveloped. A fourth property, Markham Gardens in Staten Island which was built as temporary housing for Staten Island shipyard workers 61 year ago, was selected because of the level of its deterioration.

**Capital Program**

The Plan reports the reorganization of NYCHA's Division of Capital Projects and Development. This reorganization will strengthen the oversight of NYCHA's new Construction Management (CM)/Build Program, which will make use of construction management companies for approximately one half of NYCHA's capital portfolio. The overall goal is to improve the quality and timeliness of work at NYCHA's developments. Under the program, each CM Builder will be responsible for the creation of pre-qualified bidders' lists using criteria which include project experience, financial strength, client references and capacity. Bidders will also be required to participate in a State-approved apprenticeship program to foster long-term careers for NYCHA residents.

**Expanded Community Service Exemptions**

Based on comments from both the RAB and the public, the Plan enumerates the Community Service exemptions that will be expanded. It is anticipated that these expanded exemptions will be implemented on January 1st, once HUD has completed its review of the Plans. The expanded exemptions include: individuals enrolled in trade schools, whether or not the award of a general equivalency (GED) or high school diploma is associated with the course of study; single adults with a child below the age of six who can produce a letter from one childcare center stating that space is not currently available; and victims of domestic violence who have been approved for a transfer but have not yet moved into the new apartment.

The entire plan can be viewed on NYCHA's web site at [nyc.gov/nycha](http://nyc.gov/nycha). Starting in January it will be time to begin the process all over again.

*Tino Hernandez*

**Before You Mail That Check...**

How often have you written a check and put it in the mail a day or so before you knew the money would be in your account to cover it, relying on the few days it usually takes the bank to process it?

On October 28th, federal legislation called "Check 21" went into effect, which allows banks to scan and process checks electronically, which often results in them clearing the same day they are received! Instead of the usual two to four days it usually takes a bank to clear checks against an account, checks can clear almost immediately.

So, please don't mail any checks unless you have the money in the bank to cover it, or you may risk a bounced check charge.

At the same time, if you deposit an out-of-town check written from a bank in another state, or another federal banking region, your bank may not make the funds available to you any faster, even though the check may clear instantly at both ends. Moral of the story, you may not be able to make withdrawals and should not write checks against that money until you are sure the check you deposited has cleared.

So, play it safe and only send checks when the money is in your account.

**CITY HARVEST**

*(Continued from page 1)*

of the day all the volunteers form a circle and talk about what they think they can do to make it better. I just told them, "Thank you."

The pilot program at Melrose is for one year and may be extended depending on its success. City Harvest and NYCHA hope to bring the Mobile Market to residents in developments in other boroughs.

**FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY AND THE SAFETY OF YOUR NEIGHBORS, ONLY BUZZ PEOPLE YOU KNOW INTO THE BUILDING AND NEVER PROP THE FRONT DOOR OPEN!**

*Deborah's Diary*

*By Deborah Williams*

**The Gift of Love**—Magazines have printed articles about Maria Davis of Mott Haven Houses in the South Bronx, praising her for her dedication in promoting AIDS awareness. For those of you who might not be familiar with the name Maria Davis, I'll give you a little background. Maria was once a top model who could be seen on showroom runways, modeling for an array of fashion designers and manufacturers for major department store chains. As much as she loved to model, Maria had another interest she longed to pursue and that was to work in the entertainment industry. She was determined to make her dream come true. While pursuing a career in music, Maria started waiting tables in clubs and restaurants patronized by celebrities, recording artists, and music executives, who gave her guidance and direction as well as inspiration. Before too long, Maria became a producer and director herself, creating and promoting her own music showcase M.A.D. Wednesday's at New York City's Soul Cafe on 42nd Street. The acclaimed M.A.D Wednesday's music showcases provide venues for signed and unsigned R&B and hip-hop artists and comedians. Through M.A.D Wednesday's Maria was able to create a haven for young people to gain experience as performers. Maria has said that working with young people and seeing them succeed made her feel good, and that feeling became her joy. It was this joy and her love for others as well as a positive diagnosis for the HIV virus that led Maria on a personal crusade as an HIV/AIDS activist. As an activist Maria has spoken and volunteered her time at Harlem United, The Actor's Fund, Gay Men's Health Crisis and Life Beat. She also brought her message to NYCHA residents on November 18th at Brooklyn's Glenmore Community Center during a Sexual Health workshop. Maria's motto is: "Learn to love each other and remember the best part of life is that no matter how much anyone tries to darken your situation the light always shines through. Finally, believe half of what you see and none of what you hear because your enemy today might turn out to be your angel tomorrow." *Well today, I would like to say thank you for all you have done to spread the word about AIDS /HIV awareness.*

**Heroes**—On November 4, 2004 at Castle Hill Houses in the Bronx, resident Maria Silver thought she was going to lose her precious pet cat Nene forever. For three days Ms. Silver cried and watched Nene, who survived a fall from Ms. Silver's fourth floor window only to find the cat being pursued by a dog. Nene dashed up a 40-foot tree where she remained for three days. Other City agencies and Animal Care & Control were unable to rescue Nene and not even the sound of Ms. Silver's sobbing voice could convince Nene that it was safe to come down. It was the actions of two teen residents, Manuel Jimenez and Michael Vazquez, that brought Nene down from the tree. Manuel Jimenez climbed onto the shoulders of Michael Vazquez and with the yank of a paw Nene came down out of the tree. Ms. Silver had found her knights in shining armor. The ordeal was over and Ms. Silver couldn't contain her joy—at last Nene was back in her arms. *That's a very heroic thing you guys did. You not only saved a life you brought two loved ones together. Bravo!*

**Congratulations**—After 21 years of community involvement, Lisa Kenner, a resident of Brooklyn's Van Dyke Houses for 45 years and Van Dyke Resident Association President for two years, was elected into office as the female State Committee Member (District Leader) for the 55th Assembly District which includes Brownsville, Bedford-Stuyvesant and East Flatbush. "I owe it all to Mary Warren," said Ms. Kenner of the former District Leader and Resident Association President of Long Island Baptist Houses in Brooklyn, who sadly passed away three years ago. "She was my inspiration. I don't think I would have run if she didn't encourage me. I remember asking Mary, 'Why do you think I should run for District Leader?' Mary's response was short and simple, 'Because you care,'" said Ms. Kenner. Ms. Kenner promises to bring additional educational programs to the community. "I hope my being elected will bring hope to the community and send the message that whatever it is you want to do in life or whatever goals you set for yourself you can achieve." Ms. Kenner graduated from Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn where she majored in Public Administration. *Well Ms. Kenner, I congratulate you on your new position. I am sure you are indeed a remarkable woman.*



### The NYCHA "Not Wanted" List

In this issue we continue our editorial policy of publishing the names of individuals who have been permanently excluded from our public housing developments. Listing the proscribed persons is part of the effort to keep residents informed of NYCHA's ongoing efforts to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers in public housing and to allow for the peaceful and safe use of our facilities. Here follows a list of the people excluded after hearings were held on August 27, and September 3, 10, and 17, 2003. **REMEMBER, IF YOU SEE ANY OF THESE INDIVIDUALS ON HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPERTY, PLEASE CALL YOUR MANAGEMENT OFFICE OR THE POLICE! THIS LISTING IS PROVIDED TO ALL POLICE SERVICE AREAS.**

#### Prohibited as of August 27, 2003

- Jamal Fowler Case 5563/03 formerly associated with the third floor of 773 Manor Road, Todt Hill Houses, Staten Island.
- Alex Ortiz Case 5550/03 formerly associated with the fourteenth floor of 930 East 4th Walk, Wald Houses, Manhattan
- Russell Britton Case 212/03 formerly associated with the eighth floor of 712 East Gun Hill Road, Gun Hill Houses, the Bronx.
- Adrian Lash Case 5729/03 formerly associated with the thirteenth floor of 2250 West 11th Street, Marlboro Houses, Brooklyn.
- Kashiem Ingram Case 4948/03 formerly associated with the third floor of 40 Roxbury Street, Mariner's Harbor Houses, Staten Island.
- Jamal Boone
- Jermel Boone

#### Prohibited as of September 3, 2003

- Adam Dicks Case 5702/03 formerly associated with the fifth floor of 420 Columbia Street, Red Hook West Houses, Brooklyn.
- James Norales Case 3172/03 formerly associated with the second floor of 210-T West 153rd Street, Harlem River Houses, Manhattan.
- Jerry Leverette Case 5692/03 formerly associated with the third floor of 139 Brabant Street, Mariner's Harbor Houses, Staten Island.

#### Prohibited as of September 10, 2003

- Rakim Kelly Case 5901/03 formerly associated with the twelfth floor of 3002 Surf Avenue, Coney Island Houses, Brooklyn.
- Shauntay Spencer Case 5946/03 formerly associated with the fourteenth floor of 5240 Broadway, Marble Hill Houses, Manhattan.
- Luis Rojas Case 4768/03 formerly associated with the fifth floor of 427 West 26th Street, Chelsea- Elliott Houses, Manhattan.
- Lonnie Thomas Case 6058/03 formerly associated with the fourth floor of 426 Columbia Street, Red Hook West Houses, Brooklyn.
- Dennis Washington Case 5984/03 formerly associated with the fourth floor of 730 Euclid Avenue, Cypress Hills Houses, Brooklyn.
- Charles Lorenzo Case 4802/03 formerly associated with the eleventh floor of 446 West 26th Street, Chelsea-Elliott Houses, Manhattan.
- Darryl Calier Case 4794/03 formerly associated with the fourteenth floor of 428 West 26th Street, Chelsea-Elliott Houses, Manhattan.

#### Prohibited as of September 17, 2003

- Edgardo Capo Case 6106/03 formerly associated with the second floor of 1370 Fifth Avenue, King Towers, Manhattan.
- Tawana Cummings Case 5410/03 formerly associated with the fourth floor of 2949 Eighth Avenue, Polo Grounds Houses, Manhattan.
- Carl Clark Case 6078/03 formerly associated with the tenth floor of 450 East 169th Street, Webster/Morrisania Air Rights Houses, the Bronx.

### From The Chief's Corner

## Holiday Safety Tips

The Housing Bureau wants this holiday season to be a safe and joyous time of the year for all the residents and employees of the New York City Housing Authority. Because many of us are preoccupied with the details of holiday planning and shopping, normal safety precautions are sometimes forgotten. Follow these safety tips to make sure your holiday season is safe.



Housing Bureau Police Chief Joanne Jaffe

- Be alert and aware of your surroundings at all times. Criminals often confront people who are distracted;
- Travel on populated, well lit streets. If possible, travel with a friend;
- Plan your purchases in advance and carry only the amount of cash necessary for the purchase. If you must carry a large sum of money, divide the cash between your purse, pockets and wallet;
- If you are taking the subway, look for the red or green lights outside the entrance to determine if the entrance is open. A red light indicates the entrance is closed, while a green light indicates it is open;
- Ladies, carry your purse close to you body. Place one end of the purse in the palm of your hands and the other in the bend of your elbow. Never carry a purse by the handle or wrap the strap around your body;
- Place wallets in your front pants pockets or an inside jacket pocket;
- Don't wait until you reach your front door to look for your keys. Have them ready ahead of time;
- Don't buzz in someone who rings your bell until you have verified their identity. This will help protect both yourself and your neighbors.

#### WATCH OUT FOR CON ARTISTS...

It's not only that time of the year for you to go shopping, but also for con artists to start shopping for their next victim. Con artists use a number of ploys to scam you and steal your property. One common scam involves a couple of cohorts, causing a commotion to divert your attention while the other is picking your pocket. Other scams include but are not limited to posing as utility workers, NYCHA workers or trades people to gain access into your home. Still others conduct more elaborate scams that may involve as many as seven con artists. A general rule to remember is, that **IF IT SEEMS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, IT PROBABLY IS.**

**Have A Joyous And Safe Holiday Season!**

Find out...

How to choose a good nursing home,

How to compare home health agencies,

What your Medicare benefits cover, and more.

Call 1-800-MEDICARE  
(1-800-633-4227)

English or Spanish

For hearing impaired  
TTY 1-877-486-2048

Or visit

[www.Medicare.gov](http://www.Medicare.gov)

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## Domestic Violence Borough Conferences

(Continued from page 1)

NYCHA's Deputy General Manager Douglas Apple, the first speaker at Rutgers, emphasized NYCHA's appreciation for its social services staff and others in the field who deal with domestic violence on a daily basis.

"I really think this is one of the more important things we do," Mr. Apple said. "Having worked as a case worker, or the equivalent of a housing assistant, early in my career I realize how difficult it is to try to help people who may not be ready for help. This is an opportunity for you to talk about the issue of domestic violence in a way you may not be able to on a regular basis."

Mr. Apple thanked NYCHA's Department of Community Operations Deputy General Manager Hugh B. Spence and Assistant Deputy General Manager Michelle Pinnock, along with Department of Social Services Director Nora Reissig-Lazzaro. He then introduced the next speaker, Manhattan North Council of Presidents Chair Barbara G. Barber as, "One of our most important resident leaders, someone who gives me advice that is on the money almost all the time."

Ms. Barber expressed her determination for the coming year to make all of NYCHA residents in her district understand domestic violence. "We have to care," Ms. Barber said, "because our children are important."

The keynote speaker, Research Coordinator Christina Alex from the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, works with 14 City agencies, overseeing programs for youth and teenagers. In her work Ms. Alex develops policy and programs for victims of domestic violence.

"Research shows a range of problems in infants and toddlers who witness domestic violence," she said. "These include regressive behaviors; in slightly older children, stomach aches, asthma, and headaches. Older children can become aggressive, withdrawn, or depressed, and see danger where none exists. They don't do well in school because it's hard for them to focus when they're worried about whether or not their parent will be alive when they get home. They become isolated and ashamed, feel powerless and develop low self-esteem. They learn that the world is scary, violence is love, men are cruel and women are powerless." She went on to say that the irony is that people often stay in abusive relationships because of the children.

One of the problems Ms. Alex pointed out is that these children are often misdiagnosed as having Attention Deficit Disorder and given a prescription, so that the root cause of the child's behavior is not addressed.

"The best way to keep children safe is to keep their nonabusive parents safe," Ms. Alex said in conclusion. She emphasized how important it is for children who are living in violent situations to have an adult they can confide in and trust.

Each conference concluded with NiteStar's "Reality Show." Through drama, dance and song, the gifted young performers, all between the ages of 14 and 25 who were recruited from area schools and communities, depicted the plight of Jessie and her abusive boyfriend R.C. and the reactions of their friends as they either ignored the couple's situation, or encouraged them to face their problem. The play was followed by a question and answer period, followed by a resource fair with representatives from a variety of City agencies and nonprofit organizations.

Rutgers Houses Resident Association President Eric Crooke, who has lived at the development since 1962, said he was happy to have the conference at the community center in his development. "It's a topic that needs to be discussed," he said. "I think it's more undercover now than it used to be. Once the issue was brought out in the open domestic violence became more of a secret."

**New York City's 24-Hour  
Domestic Violence Hotline  
1-800-621-HOPE**



## Winter Fire Safety Tips

At the New York City Fire Department we often talk about how smoke detectors save lives. Year after year our experience as firefighters clearly demonstrates the importance of smoke detectors in the home.

For example, just recently in East New York, a woman named Doris decided to check the smoke detectors in her home. She shared the home with her four children and she knew that smoke detectors were an important part of keeping her family safe. Doris discovered that her detectors did not work and notified her landlord, who replaced them with working detectors.

A few days later, while the family slept, a fire broke out by the front door of their fifth floor apartment. Because the alarm woke Doris, she was able to alert the rest of her family and safely evacuate them from the apartment before the fire became too serious. Had Doris not checked her smoke alarms, she might never have gotten the early warning that allowed her to save herself and her family.

As the winter weather begins to hit New York City, the unfortunate fact is that the cold weather brings more risks for home fires. Every year, when the people of this city start to put on jackets and gloves, the New York City Fire Department prepares for what is known as "fire season." The sad fact is most fires that occur in the home are easily preventable. There are simple steps all New Yorkers can take to ensure that this winter is a safe and secure one.

**Space Heaters** Space heaters need space. Portable space heaters need a three-foot (one meter) clearance from anything that can burn. You should always turn them off before leaving the room or going to sleep. *Did you know?: Two of every three home heating fires in the U.S. in 1998, and three of every four related deaths, were attributed to space heating equipment.*

**Home Heating** Never use your stove or oven to heat the apartment. This can lead to Carbon Monoxide (CO) poisoning. Carbon Monoxide is odorless, colorless and tasteless, and it is produced by any device that burns fuel. *By law, every home heated by a fossil fuel burning boiler or furnace must be equipped with a Carbon Monoxide (CO) detector.*

**Christmas Trees** If you are going to display a real tree, choose a freshly cut tree. When you get the tree home, cut a few inches off the trunk before placing in water. Keep your tree away from heat sources, sparks or flames. *Remember: LIVE TREES NEED WATER! Check and refill often.*

**Christmas Lights** Check all the lights prior to plugging in your set. Do not use damaged light sets. Do not leave Christmas tree lights on when nobody is around. Use only Underwriters Laboratory (UL) approved lights on your tree.

**Candles** Candles should be in stable holders on a flat, stable surface. Create a one-foot circle of safety surrounding all candles. **NEVER** leave the house with candles burning. **NEVER** leave children or pets alone with a lit candle. **NEVER** use candles near combustible materials such as curtains, drapes, bedding, or cabinets. *Remember: Candles need a one-foot circle of safety.*

### Fire Safety Plans

As required by law, NYCHA displays and posts fire safety plans on the inside of each apartment door and distributes fire safety materials to building residents. Read those materials and familiarize yourself with your building's layout, its fire suppression capabilities, such as whether or not your building has sprinklers, and fire escape procedures. Always know where all building exits are located. Taking these steps will help ensure that you, your family and the residents of your building stay safe.



**Chief of Fire Prevention  
Patrick McNally**

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If you have children and your household income is less than \$35,000 a year, you can qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The EITC is a cash refund from the federal, state and city governments that can pay as much as \$5,000 for each year that you qualify. You can only get it when you file your taxes. And it's your money, a tax refund for doing your part, earning a living while taking care of your family.

In January, when you receive your W-2 forms, call the NYC general helpline at 3-1-1 to learn more about the EITC or check online to [www.nyc.gov/eitc](http://www.nyc.gov/eitc).

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- training in searching for jobs on the Internet
- access to job training and education programs

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In the Bronx Is Looking For Tenants**



**N**YCHA is pleased to announce that it is working with two not-for-profit organizations, Presbyterian Senior Services (PSS) and the West Side Federation for Senior and Supportive Housing (WSFSSH) to introduce a new housing development, the PSS GrandParent Family Apartments, located at 951 Prospect Avenue in the Bronx. The development will be available for occupancy in December 2004.

The 50 apartments in this new building will be exclusively for grandparents, or elderly caregivers, 62 or older, who care for minor grandchildren (under the age of 18) or other relatives. A family relationship such as grandparent-grandchild and a legal care relationship such as adoptive parent or guardian will be required. You may apply even if you do not currently have a legal care relationship with the minor child or children for whom you are caring.

PSS and WSFSSH will assist you regarding the legal care relationship during the period prior to occupancy. A comprehensive program of supportive services will be available on-site. If you are interested in this unique opportunity or know someone who is, just ask your Development's Management Office for a "Tenant Request to Move PSS/GFA" — NYCHA form 040.050G. Complete the form and return it to your Housing Assistant for further processing.

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