

RRHA Police Department - - - Making A Difference In the Community It Serves!



(L-R) Sgt. Jon Banberger, Chief Hal Hazelton,
and Cpl. Emmanuel Spann

It is not only the desire for all citizens to live and raise their young in a crime free environment; it is man's inalienable right. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness have been called the inalienable rights of man, which include the right to live in a crime free environment. "The real significance of

crime is in its being a breach of faith with the community of mankind." (Source: Joseph Conrad, Philosopher)

The Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, through the development and implementation of its Strategic Plan have identified building vibrant and safer communities as one of its priorities. As a result, the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority through its Police Department have demonstrated a commitment to work with resident and community stakeholders and the Richmond Police Department and others to ensure the

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Youth Win Medals At National Karate State Championship Tournament



(L-R) Championship Karate students Roderick
Johnson, Alysia Harrison and Bria Harrison

To accomplish any goals in life takes discipline; to face an opponent, especially in combat, takes discipline and courage.

To be a 1st place, 2nd place, 3rd place and even a 4th place winner in a USA-National Karate Federation State Championship Tournament not only takes discipline and courage; it also takes obedience to instruction, hard work, self-confidence, self-determination, a higher degree of skills than your opponent and a great instructor.

Congratulations to Renshi Fowlkes and his students at Henrico Dai-ichi Karate Dojo for their recent achievement as state champions. Karate student Bria Harrison (14) of Mosby Court commented, "I feel good about participating in karate class because it gives me self-confidence, it lets me know that I can defend myself against others. It also teaches me self-discipline and respect for others. I like participating in tournaments because it's fun and we get to travel."

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RRHA Completes Master Planning Meeting Series --- Keeps Communication Line Open

Anyone who participated in the six-month, four-part Master Planning Public Meeting Series for both North Jackson Ward and the Dove Street Area realizes RRHA's commitment to communication. Flyers were dispersed, letters mailed, newsletters distributed, phone calls made, emails exchanged and videos posted to ensure as much community participation as possible.

RRHA's Master Plan – simply put - represents a vision to build strong, vibrant communities. From that vision, RRHA developed the Master Planning Public Meetings series to engage, inform and educate the community. RRHA began the Public Meetings series by introducing



Community participation with Master Planning Meetings

ICON Architecture, Inc., who led the planning process for the revitalization of the North Jackson Ward, Fay Towers and Dove Street Area communities.

Hundreds of residents and community members participated in the public meetings lending valuable insight into the community's vision for improved neighborhoods. "For all who have been a part of this process from the beginning, I can't thank you enough." said Anthony Scott, Executive Director for RRHA. He went on to say, "We want to keep you informed about what we are doing, how we are doing it, and when we are doing it".

The Master Planning process began with a set of basic principles and

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RRHA Police Department - - -Making A Difference (continued from page 1)

safety of its residents in and around their communities.

RRHA's efforts are led by Chief Hal Hazelton and a nine member police force, who have developed a strong and effective partnership with the Richmond Police Department and other law enforcement agencies.

The RRHA Police Department has developed a comprehensive public safety initiative to bring an improved quality of life and contribute to a reduction of crime in the city. The RRHA Police Department initiative has utilized Crime Prevention through Environmental Design concepts (CPTED), property as well as management and lease enforcement policies, technology and other crime prevention strategies that will enhance and improve community policing efforts, reduce crime and develop safer communities throughout public housing developments.

"We've been around as a public safety department since 2001, when we became a certified police department in 2006 good things began to happen. It gave the RRHA community a sense that it had its own police department and that gave the community an opportunity to see that they are really cared about. Having a police department within the Housing Authority community is unique policing. We know the majority of our residents and they know the majority of my officers," stated RRHA Police Chief Hal Hazelton. Chief Hazelton continued, "RRHA residents are a lot more apt to talk to my officers because they know them and they see them every day. A major part of our primary mission is - - - we serve our residents. Since our inception as a bonafide police department the streets have changed for the better. We've become more ingrained with the residents and they know and trust us even more than they ever had. That is directly attributed to the downward trend in community crime."

The RRHA PD is actively involved in all of RRHA's community functions. Their visibility at these community functions along with their often direct participation in many of the programs gives all in attendance an extra feeling of safety which has led to an increase in outside partnerships and RRHA resident turn out.

The Annual Bike-A-Thon, The Annual National Night Out Against Crime, The Annual Christmas



Bike-A-Thon 2008 participants

just watching the fun and excitement on the faces of the kids.

The other thing that I think that's very unique is the Halloween program. Of course we're out there to keep the streets safe, we're also out there to give away a little candy. The



RRHA Police participate in "Job Shadowing Day"

programs, Annual Community Day Celebrations, The Annual Halloween program and The Annual Citywide Health Fair are among the many outstanding Housing Authority community programs the RRHA PD are a part of.

"When I think of the many RRHA programs my department is involved in, I have to talk about one of my favorites - - the Annual Bike-A-Thon which is coming up again on June 20. The Bike-A-Thon is near and dear to us because that is our time to mix it up with the younger folks in our neighborhoods and they get a chance to ride with the police," commented Chief Hazelton.

"This little brain child of Wallace Wilkins, RRHA Resident Services Advisor, Steve Benham, RRHA Area Housing Manager and members of Greater Mt. Moriah Baptist Church started with a hand full of children and now there's 350 to 400 kids, parents and community volunteers out there. Most of the bikes are donated courtesy of the Richmond Police Department. It's a real joy

whole idea is to start that partnership between our police department and the children at a very young age.

As for community relations, not just for our adults, but we want to have a very good relationship with our young folks as well. We want them to understand that we're out here to help them. We want them to continue to develop trust especially through our public service programs. We're very modest and we do a lot behind the scenes, but it is good to know that we are recognized for the community services that we provide to our residents."

Community Support

- RRHA, through its CRIME HOTLINE, encourages the community to call 804-780-4006 or email RRHA Police@rrha.state.va.us to leave information regarding crime. Calls are anonymous, if requested.
- Through partnerships with the Richmond Tenant Organization and public housing community and resident involvement, RRHA PD continues to make significant contributions to the city's policing effort.

RRHA Recipient of Stimulus Funds for Housing Modernization Creates Job Opportunities for Residents

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recently announced an award of capital funds to public housing authorities throughout the nation.

On March 13th the city of Richmond's Mayor Dwight C. Jones and Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority's (RRHA) Executive Director Anthony Scott, during a special press conference at City Hall, made the announcement of this stimulus funds award to RRHA.

Over the next three years the funds will be allocated for construction and modernization of RRHA public housing units throughout the city of Richmond.

Funds will be appropriated for planned construction activities such as: construction of kitchens and bathrooms, interior and exterior building improvements, management operations, heating and plumbing, resident relocation cost and more.

Now that's very good news, especially during these somewhat challenging economic times. Now here's the Great News!! RRHA residents and qualified city residents can benefit through the HUD Section 3 job opportunity program.

How does Section 3 work?

- RRHA contract administrators recommend or request that vendors and contractors (who have been awarded contracts) use RRHA residents to fill vacant positions within their companies for the duration of the contract with RRHA
- RRHA's Capacity Building Office will provide vendors/contractors with a list of qualified residents to interview.

"The HUD Section 3 program represents an outstanding opportunity for RRHA residents to move toward financial self-sufficiency while gaining skills through on-the-job training. The exposure to the world of work and demonstrating the ability to meet and exceed an employer's demands will serve them far beyond their participation in the program. It is our hope that employers will see the value and contributions made by our residents and will hire them on a full time permanent basis. RRHA's Resident Services Department will be coordinating resident recruitment, preparation, and assignment to Section 3 worksites. Interested Public Housing residents and Housing Choice Voucher Program participants (HCVP) may call 780-4835 to sign up for upcoming Section 3 informational meetings," stated Grace Lewis, Director of Resident Services. (See schedule on back page)

RRHA Completes Master Planning (continued from page 1)

commitments RRHA has made to the community. Those principles include: providing safe and affordable housing; relocation and transitional services; a goal to maintain 4,100 public housing units throughout the city; and providing mixed-use, mixed-income communities.

RRHA wants to provide public housing families, not only safe and affordable housing, but a better socio-economic environment as well.

Throughout the Master Planning Process residents were eager to ask. "Where will we go?", "What will happen to us?" and "Who will help us?" RRHA was eager to answer those questions. RRHA is not doing away with public housing, not leaving residents without homes and not making residents relocate without assistance. RRHA will offer transitional, financial, educational and professional services to ensure the success of every affected resident and family.

North Jackson Ward:

The Preferred Plan would include a mixed-used/mixed-income community with up to 2,000 units complete with office space; a new community school; a new residential building for the elderly; and new playground areas as well as green space for the community, providing for a wide range of housing types, both ownership and rental, including public housing-eligible units, affordable and workforce sales and rental units, and market-rate units-again including both homeownership and rental offerings. With a goal of up to 30% available for public housing eligible families. This alternative also meets all land use and urban design goals, and it best fits the description of a "community of choice."

Dove Street:

Residents from Highland Park and surrounding neighborhoods gathered with community leaders, to hear the consultant team's final presentation on the master planning effort for the Dove Street Area.

With RRHA Executive Director, Anthony Scott and his staff on hand to answer questions,

Dove Street: The Preferred Plan



RRHA outlined the overall master planning goals for the Dove Street Area, which reflect RRHA's Strategic Plan, particularly goal one: The

North Jackson Ward: The Preferred Plan



A Neighborhood School
 B Institutional/ Commercial uses
 C New Fay Towers Senior / Assisted Living
 D Phase I Mixed Income Rental
 E Office / Retail
 F Neighborhood Park (with Friends Family Center)

revitalization of residential and commercial properties, the creation and improvement of quality affordable housing, the development of mixed-use and mixed-income neighborhoods, and the deconcentration of poverty.

The specific goals for the Dove Street Area Master Plan include:

A financially feasible and sustainable mixed-income residential neighborhood with a goal of up to 30% of the new housing available to public housing-eligible residents; a wide range of housing choices; a phased master plan which begins with the former Dove Court, Carrington, and Northridge sites; a flexible approach to later phases. The Dove Street Area Master Plan will also include a new pedestrian-friendly neighborhood street network; a new face for the neighborhood on 1st Avenue and Dove Street; an open space and trail network throughout the community linked to the Greenway and a potential later-phased redevelopment plan for the underutilized Dove Street Park, and possibly a new elementary school.

Public housing residents affected by the revitalization will be able to receive the following services:

- A Relocation Specialist will work with families with all the services needed for a smooth and easy transition.
- Counseling through the RRHA Capacity Building Office will be offered to assist families with available housing options. Meetings regarding families with relocation activity and benefit information will be held.
- RRHA will provide families with the opportunity to connect to RRHA programs and services provided through community partners. RRHA will assist with job training services to secure employment as well as educational and financial services for families, if needed.

If additional information is needed, contact the RRHA Capacity Building Office at 780-4835 or visit their office at 200 Hospital Street.

RRHA Student Resident Awarded National Academic Scholarship

Jennifer Tillery, 17, is an academic star. She earned 1,453 on her Scholastic Aptitude Test (S.A.T.) that's only 147 points from perfect. She has a 3.88 grade point average and this year she will graduate from high school one year ahead of schedule.

To add icing to her already sweet academic accomplishments, Miss Tillery has been selected -from applications received from across the country - as the 2009 Stephen J. Bollinger Memorial Scholarship Award recipient. In May, she will be recognized at the Public Housing Authorities Directors Association's Conference (PHADA) in Atlanta, Ga.

The \$7,000 Bollinger Scholarship is named for Stephen J. Bollinger; one of the PHADA's founding members and former U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Assistant Secretary. The scholarship was established to encourage academic excellence and community responsibility among graduating high school seniors, preparing to enter college. Since 1985, PHADA has recognized and rewarded academic excellence in public and assisted housing youth through its scholarship program.



Jennifer Tillery

Miss Tillery's dream is to attend Harvard University and major in biochemistry. She plans to pursue a career in obstetrics and gynecology. So far, Miss Tillery has been accepted at Virginia Union University and Chowan University in Murfreesboro, N.C. She has also applied to Howard University in Washington, D.C., and Spelman College in Atlanta.

In addition to being a part of Armstrong High School's Junior Reserved Officer Training Corps or J.R.O.T.C., Miss Tillery is a member of the cheering squad and the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA). She enjoys reading, math and law are her favorite subjects.

Miss Tillery attends Armstrong High School and lives in Gilpin Court with her mother, Nancy Bucey and her brother, Tory, 7 and sister, Alexis, 20.

"Many wish to possess knowledge, but few, comparatively speaking, are willing to pay the price" (Source: Juvenal, Philosopher). Way to go Jennifer... the future is yours!

RRHA Offers Affordable Homeownership Incentives

For Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) the words 'Building Vibrant Communities' are not just catchy phrase words that sound good; instead, they are the opening phrase to an anthem that has been sung by RRHA's leadership choir for over sixty years.

It has always been RRHA's goal to provide residents the opportunity to achieve the American Dream through self-sufficiency programs. For some, owning a home is the American Dream, and through the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority's (RRHA) programs and services homeownership is achievable...affordable...and available!

"We have a number of resources available for people who want to own a home. We think of this as our version of a "Stimulus Package" for buyers. We also believe owning a home can help build wealth and we offer many products and services to make Homeownership affordable and achievable," said Anthony Scott, RRHA Executive Director.

The RRHA Homeownership "Stimulus Package" for first-time homebuyers includes:

- Down payment assistance, closing costs, and forgivable grants
- Below market-rate loans
- Federal Stimulus Tax Credit
- Matching savings account
- Affordable pricing
- Free homeownership counseling

Robert Jackson RRHA Homecenter Coordinator stated: "Here at the RRHA Homecenter, we have launched an effort to promote RRHA's Affordable Homeownership Incentives.

We've highlighted six very important points. We offer down payment assistance, closing costs, between \$20,000 and \$70,000 for first time homebuyers, money that's in a forgivable grant in order to help them



Neighborhood Homeownership Program Model Home: 1113 South Lombardy Street



Our affordable pricing piece with our Neighborhood Homeownership Initiative we offer single-family homes for sale beginning as low as \$130,000. These are really good quality homes. 2, 3, 4, and 5 bedroom homes completely renovated with heat and central air systems and many modern amenities.

purchase their home.

There's also a program called SPARC financing (Sponsoring Partnerships and Revitalizing Communities) which allows us to offer our first time homebuyers a reduced interest rate because of our partnership with VHDA (Virginia Housing Development Authority).

There's Federal Stimulus Tax Credit for first time homebuyers of \$8,000.

We also provide a Matching Savings Account program. Through the Virginia Individual Development Account (VIDA) program, a qualified buyer can establish this matching savings account program, which will match funds up to \$4,000. This money can then be used as a down payment on a home or to start a business which is a real good incentive for first time homebuyers.

RRHA offers a Free Homeownership Counseling Program in order to get them ready for homeownership. We help put together a complete financing package. We're really excited about this Stimulus Package Initiative which we believe is going to allow us to maximize homeownership opportunities among the citizens of Richmond, especially to help revitalize some of these neighborhoods we're targeting."

We invite all city residents to come out to our Model House open house event at 1113 S. Lombardy St. on April 26th."

For Homecenter information call 780-4884.

Housing Authority Youth Win Gold and Silver (continued from page 1)



Karate student demonstrates moves while Renshi Fowlkes and class watch

Student Roderick Johnson (15) of Gilpin Court said, "I have a blue belt in karate. I like going to tournaments because it teaches me different things and I like to travel. Karate class teaches me self-discipline, how to control my anger and how to fight and learn not to fight."

Student Alysia Harrison (9) of Mosby Court commented,

"I have a blue belt with a green stripe. I like going to tournaments because it shows discipline in spirit inside of me. I like learning karate because it teaches me discipline, respect and self-control."

"Teaching my students, it's a great feeling. I enjoy working with them. It gives me an opportunity to show them that if they work hard, they can achieve a lot," quoted Renshi Fowlkes.

Renshi continued, "I've got a great bunch of kids here that's doing the hard work. They're the ones who are actually competing and winning. I'm very proud of them."

The kids did an outstanding "JOB." Results are as follows:

- Bria 2nd Place (Silver Medal) Kata & Weapon
- Alysia 1st Place (Gold Medal) Kata "VA USA-NKF State Champion" in her age Group 2nd Place (Silver Medal) Kumite
- Roderick 1st Place (Gold Medal) Kata & Kumite VA USA-NKF State Champion" in his age Group. They will be traveling to Florida to represent the state of Virginia in the upcoming National Karate Tournament.

"Purpose, continued hard work and discipline makes the bridge to success in life a lot easier to cross." (source: RWE, Philosopher)



Students pose with trophy at State Tournament

RRHA's Burrell Sisters: An Awesome Duo of Academic and Athletic Excellence!

Burrell Sisters Recipients of Style Weekly's 2009 "16 Under 16" Youth Recognition Award.

What a wonderful experience for a dedicated parent to plant the seeds of positive direction in the lives of his or her child(ren), and then through continued cultivation watch them develop into successful fruit bearing trees. Trees that will someday produce great sustenance in our society. The unique significance is not the tree itself—it is the fruit and the oxygen in which the tree produces.

Latifah and Fatimah Neblett- Burrell, twin daughters of proud parent Teresa Neblett-Burrell, are an explosive and awesome duo of academic and athletic accomplishments. Latifah and Fatimah are current scholar role students attending Richmond Community High School. They are members of FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America). They are members of Armstrong High School's track team. They also participate in and help to coordinate school talent shows through Zuri Entertainment in which they are members of.

For the Burrell sisters, being actively involved in mind-sharpening and esteem-building programs has always been a natural part of their lives. In the Second grade Mom enrolled them in a karate class. In Fourth grade they joined Minds In Motion, a dance group organized through The Richmond Ballet. They were also members of Chimboraza Elementary School's reading club. In the Fifth grade both sisters had the idea to run for Student Council President, but Fatimah not wanting to compete against Latifah, decided to step back, and instead, became sister Latifah's campaign manager. Needless to say, Latifah won the Student Council President position.

In the Sixth grade they both ran track for Coach Evans' Virginia Comets Track club. Currently both young ladies are active members of Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority's Youth Sports and Fine Arts Academy (YSFAA), and have been recognized for many outstanding accomplishments throughout their membership.

The YSFAA is a comprehensive prevention program that uses sports as a catalyst for engaging youth in organized structured programs to help youth aspire to reach their fullest potential. Exposing members to sports and educational experiences will ultimately lead to obtainment of athletic and academic scholarships for YSFAA members.

Both Latifah and Fatimah have been exceptional in the YSFAA programs especially in the area of aquatic sports. At age eleven Fatimah was recognized by YSFAA for her outstanding swimming abilities. Latifah at age thirteen was selected by the National Association of Black Scuba Divers to participate in a scuba diving exposition to Curacao, in the Caribbeans, where she dove 51 feet to help repair an underwater scuba trail; which leads us to their latest achievement. Style Weekly's "16 Under 16" Youth Recognition Award.

On April 14th Latifah and Fatimah Neblett-Burrell were two of sixteen young people nominated and selected to receive Style Weekly's "16 Under 16" award. This year's youth were nominated for their community activism, volunteerism, artistic talent, and academic and athletic achievements. Nominees were evaluated on community impact, leadership and



(L-R) Fatimah, mother Teresa and Latifah Neblett-Burrell

creativity and/or talent.

"At this point in my life, I think that I will continue to strive for excellence both in school and in my community. I see my sister and me as role models for our peers, this makes me feel good to have somebody look at me and want to do good things in their lives because of my accomplishments," stated Latifah. Latifah continued, "After college I'm looking forward to returning to the community to help others to become successful. It's sad to see young people whose dreams have died.

It feels really great to have been recognized and honored by Style Weekly's "16 Under 16" program. It's nice to be in the paper with my sister and other kids our age will look at it and be inspired to do similarly. It's great to be an inspiration for others."

Latifah says her sister Fatimah and her mother are her biggest role models. Latifah plans to attend Howard University to become a doctor.

Fatimah commented, "I'd like to become an Astronomer, but deep down I want to be an entertainer; being on stage front and center acting or dancing. It feels good being a role model, like Barack Obama, people look at you and even though you're from the inner-city, they see that you aren't making excuses for yourself. I don't let not having as much as others upset me. You can always rise and overcome. Many slaves overcame and were successful, so why should I make excuses for myself.

Giving back to the community is very important. The YSFAA program set up by Ms. Seldon has helped us tremendously; so if we come back with our fresh ideas it would help a lot of other youth as well.

I don't have any one role model; I take bits and pieces from many. I believe you can learn something from everybody. My mother, my siblings my cousin Nataya Gordon has always been inspirational in our lives. I feel really good receiving the "16 Under 16" Style Weekly award. My sister and I work really hard, it's nice to be recognized because a lot of people who have done great things go unrecognized. To show others that youth are doing positive things is great."

Fatimah says she will follow in her brother Kareem's footsteps and will be attending Old Dominion University after high school.

"We've all endured a lot of sacrificing, but fortunately a lot of things are readily available for them as it is for other young people, they just have to reach out and grab them. Unfortunately many programs today have been cancelled because families didn't take advantage of them," commented Mother, Teresa Neblett-Burrell. Ms. Burrell continued, "I've always encouraged my children to do their best, to be the best and to always reach out to assist others, others have always assisted them. I'm very proud of them and I thank everyone who has helped us along the way."

Remember, these dynamic young achievers are only 15 years of age. Imagine how much more they are going to accomplish --- wow!

Congratulations Calhoun Cougar Pee-Wees: 2009 Basketball Champions!

The Cougar Pee-Wees basketball team gave the Gilpin Community something to brag about and to be proud of for a solid year. They hold the title as 2009 Basketball Champions (Pee-Wees 9-10 years old).

This year's champions were coached to victory by coaches Mario Mines, Dennis Pitchford and Rod Johnson. The players and their respected numbers are: #2-Reginald Revels, #23-Mario Johnson, #51-Jordan Robinson, #34-Daniel Scott, #5-Michael Queen, #6-Markel Bradley and #3-David Terrell.



Richmond Police Department Cadets Bring Warmth To Hearts of 4th Avenue Residents for Valentine's Day!

Recently members of the Richmond Police Department Cadet Training program were busy 'locking-up' the hearts of 4th Ave residents with their acts of kindness and generosity as they sponsored a Valentine's Day party for the residents.

Officer Todd Jones of the Richmond Police Department stated, "I am the instructor of the cadet program. The cadets along with myself gave the Valentine's Day party for the tenants at 1611 4th Avenue. Before I was transferred to the Police Training Academy I worked patrol in the Highland Park and Jackson Ward neighborhoods. I worked 4 years in these areas. On my breaks I would stop by 1611 4th Avenue and play spades with the tenants there. This past August I got transferred to the Academy for the Instructor's spot.

I teach the cadets all kinds of stuff about police work. Most importantly, I teach them to make sure they give back



the community.

This was a fun event that everyone enjoyed."

"On Friday, February 13 my fellow cadets and I along with other RPD personnel, visited an assisted living facility located in Richmond's Highland Park area to celebrate Valentine's Day with the elderly. The cadets distributed flowers to the women and red wrist bands to the men. Cake was also served to the seniors by Capt. Rick Snawder, OIC of the RPD Training Academy. I really enjoyed the time I spent there, whether I was playing dominos and spades with the young ladies, checkers with Ms. Audrey, ping pong with Sgt. Adams or passing out punch with Executive Director McGill," commented Police Cadet Darel T. Sweeden.

Cadet Charles A. Tucker, Jr. stated, "My involvement in the Valentine's Day party at the RRHA assisted living home was a meaningful and exciting experience. The

to the community and know the people in the neighborhoods that they work in. Once a month we do a community event. I chose 1611 4th Avenue because it was a place I used to go, and I thought the citizens there would enjoy us socializing with them.

What I try to teach my cadets is that police work isn't just about putting handcuffs on the bad guys and putting them in jail. That is just a small part of what we do. I tell them that they need to go out there and make a difference by building partnerships with the citizens in the community we serve. We cannot solve problems alone; we need all the eyes out in

Valentine's Day party was so much fun. The feeling of me bringing joy to a person's heart made me feel really good inside. We played different games with the senior citizens; we gave knowledge to them and they did the same to us. During the party I spent most of my time at the pool table.

The gentlemen at the pool table taught me and gave me helpful advice about how to become a better pool player. I will admit that I was a little rusty; being that I haven't played pool in so long. The whole entire time I was there, it truly felt like I've always been a part of their lives. Helping people is the main reason I decided to pursue this career, and that's exactly what the other cadets and I did!"

"The reward of a thing well done—is to have done it." (Source: Ralph Waldo Emerson.)
'Well done fellows.'



Fairfield Community Tenant Council Sponsors Black History Program!

The theme for the Black History program event was "Change—Our Heritage, our History". Fairfield Tenant Council President Mrs. Delores Robinson spoke emphatically about the strong need to strengthen the community. "We must have love for one another. We must find ways to help our children." Mrs. Robinson talked about the comparison of yesterday and today, and how today everything is so modernized. She also talked about life when she was a little girl and the importance of knowing our history.

The MC for the evening was Monique Vann who spoke about the correlation between President Barack Obama and President Abraham Lincoln. She also talked about the importance of young people getting involved with community activities.



Dominic Meade plays for residents and participants at Black History Program

The entertainment was presented by talented young keyboardist and Fairfield resident Dominic Meade who played beautiful renditions of gospel and contemporary music while talking about the life accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Closing remarks were done by Fairfield Tenant Council member Barbara Archer who stated, "I'm proud to serve this Fairfield community. Today our President is someone that we can relate to, but we must learn to do for ourselves. We must continue to be involved with our youth. We must continue to love one another and help others, God will bless us."

The program culminated with a full meal prepared by community residents. It was a very pleasant and knowledgeable evening for all who attended.

Former RRHA Resident Joan Seldon Turns Life's Pot Luck Circumstances Into Pot Roast Feast!

As a child growing up in what today's society would label as an impoverished environment, Joan Seldon the youngest of four siblings, had every right not to succeed. She and sisters Janice and Doris and brother James Exum would fit today's criteria of "at risk" children based on socio-economic studies of inner-city youth.

Both parents died when Joan was just a little girl, but the siblings were determined to stay together. After living with relatives and foster parents and having to relocate to several cities, Joan finally found her feet on solid ground when older sibling Janice (turned mother) landed an apartment at 1158 St. Paul Street in Gilpin Court. "When we moved to Gilpin Court, it was like paradise compared to where we had come from. We had come from living conditions a whole lot worse than here," stated Joan, "And when we got here we were happier than we had ever been. We had heat in the winter time, hot and cold running water. My brother James finally had his own bedroom, I was so happy for him.

It was such a close-knit neighborhood back then. As a teenager I remember working a job in the evenings afterschool and having to walk several blocks from the bus stop. My neighbors knew exactly what time I'd get off of the bus and they'd be out there to make sure I got home safely every night. It was wonderful growing up in Gilpin Court."

Having a solid foundation in place for Joan, Janice, Doris and James was all the Exum children needed. With little brother leading the way, the Exums started turning pot-luck conditions into 'pot-roast', complete with gravy, carrots, peas, potatoes and onions, academically speaking.

"James led the way for us by going into the military at age 17. He provided a way for all of us to go to college by sending his pay home to us. Doris and I continued to follow in Janice's footsteps by entering college after high school. At 18 James entered Officers Candidate School and later received a Bachelor's Degree from Fayetteville State



Joan Seldon, RRHA Asst. Dir. Resident Services

University in NC," Joan commented.

Joan continued, "Janice received a Bachelor's Degree from Virginia Union and a Masters Degree from RPI (Richmond Professional Institute now VCU). My sister Doris, who had earlier dropped out, went back and earned three degrees from Harvard: a Bachelors, a Masters and a Law Degree. I earned a Bachelor's Degree from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Ill."

Today Joan Seldon is Assistant Director of Resident Services for Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority. Joan commented, "I got very excited when I received an opportunity to work for RRHA and became an integral part of programs and policy change for residents. I saw this as an awesome opportunity for me to apply my skills and to give back to the very establishment and community that had assisted me as an impressionable young girl growing up without a mother and a father."

One of the many successful programs RRHA has to offer its residents is the Youth Sports and Fine Arts Academy, a vision of Joan's. "I just had this vision that we could give our Housing Authority youth exposure by introducing them to non-traditional sports such as golf, tennis, swimming, chess and such.

I wanted a program that would provide our children with mentors and instructors that would introduce them to men and women in various professional fields, and prepare them to become more actively involved in a more integrated society. I also wanted to expose our youth to participating in programs that could lead the way to possible scholarships for them to go to college.

I am honored to be able to come back to my community and feel like I'm making a difference in the lives of our children."

Chef Joan Seldon has just given us her recipe of how to take Saturday's pot luck circumstances and turn it into a delicious Sunday pot roast meal. Great Job!!!

RRHA and Area Agencies Team to Provide Housing for City's Homeless

RICHMOND REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY, RICHMOND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AUTHORITY AND HOMEWARD SIGN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Richmond, VA – Representatives of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA), Richmond Behavioral Health Authority (RBHA) and Homeward today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU joins the three agencies in an agreement to help reduce the City's homeless population by providing housing and certain social services to eligible homeless families residing in the City's homeless shelters.

In the MOU, RRHA agrees to, based on the availability of housing units, make available up to 150 units during the term of the agreement. Under the agreement, RBHA and Homeward, in partnership with its community partners, agree to screen homeless applicants, according to the requirements outlined in the MOU, prior to referring them to RRHA.

Homeward launched the Ten-Year Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in the Richmond Region in 2008. The MOU is in line with achieving the goals of that plan and will be instrumental in addressing the City's homeless problem as the number of homeless families in the city has increased resulting in full shelters. According to a recent study conducted by Homeward, on any given day in the Richmond region, there are at least 1,075 sheltered and unsheltered men, women and children experiencing homelessness. Homeward estimates that 500-800 homeless individuals in the Richmond region, in



(L-R) RRHA Exec. Dir. Anthony Scott, Homeward Exec. Dir. Kelly King Horne and RBHA Exec. Dir. Wilson Washington sign partnership agreement.

a given year are children.

"Over the period of this MOU, 150 families experiencing homelessness will have expedited access to housing," said Kelly King Horne, Homeward's Executive Director. "The families presented with keys today will not be counted in our next point-in-time census. Having housing isn't the end of their journey, but it is the end of their homelessness. This partnership supports the Richmond Region's plan to prevent and end homelessness, and by combining affordable housing and supportive services, this agreement represents a best practice in ending family homelessness."

RBHA is committed to providing quality behavioral healthcare services to all Richmond residents. RBHA

provides an extensive array of mental health, intellectual disability, and substance abuse services that significantly improve the quality of life for the individuals served and for the community at-large.

As a part of the service array, RBHA provides a continuum of supports to targeted individuals who are homeless. More than 250 individuals and families who are experiencing the crisis of homelessness are served every year through several programs. Wilson Washington, RBHA Chief Executive Officer, comments: "the agency is in motion and we are moving forward toward excellence...we have a tough job in managing complex consumers that are suffering from serious mental illness, substance abuse, and intellectual disabilities. We are tasked at accomplishing our mission in a very diverse and evolving political environment...with...competing priorities as well as scarce resources."

"This MOU tremendously enhances the services that RBHA is able to provide to homeless families. It also serves to underscore the value of genuine collaboration among various providers in the community who share a common purpose to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Richmond," adds Beth Rafferty, RBHA's Mental Health Director.

"This agreement is a step in the right direction toward eliminating homelessness in the region," said Anthony Scott, RRHA Executive Director. "RRHA is proud to be a part of this partnership with RBHA and Homeward and together we are making a difference."

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- No experience necessary. Must be at least 18 years of age
 - Men and women are encouraged to apply
 - No diploma or GED required
 - Drug screening and background check required
- Positions may include clerical, general labor, and construction



If interested please attend an information session held at

RRHA Capacity Building Office
200 Hospital Street • Richmond, VA 23219
(804) 780-4835



Choose one of the following dates and times:

Thursday, April 23rd – 10am, 2pm or 6pm

Thursday, April 30th – 10am, 2pm or 6pm



Drug screenings and background checks will be done at each information meeting. Please bring photo ID and social security card.

For information call the RRHA Capacity Building Office at 780-4835.

RRHA Homeownership Orientation Classes

All classes held at 200 Hospital Street, Richmond, unless otherwise noted.

- June 2, 2009 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
- June 20, 2009 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (Black History Museum 00 Clay St.)
- September 3, 2009 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
- December 3, 2009 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

VHDA Homeownership Classes presented by RRHA

All classes held at 200 Hospital Street, Richmond, unless otherwise noted.

- May 2, 2009 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
- June 3, 2009 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Part I
- June 4, 2009 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Part II
- June 27, 2009 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- August 1, 2009 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
- November 7, 2009 8:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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RRHA Spirit Newsletter For Residents

The RRHA Spirit Newsletter For Residents is published by the Communications Office of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority. We welcome submissions and we reserve the right to edit all materials used. Materials may be submitted to: RRHA Communications Office • 901 Chamberlayne Parkway • Richmond, Virginia 23220

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