

HOUSING HEADLINES

A NEWSLETTER FOR RESIDENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE BHA

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BHA executive director Clara Kandy shares a favorite story with students

BHA and Head Start of the Lehigh Valley Form Partnership

One in five children and their families are living in poverty in the Lehigh Valley. Head Start of the Lehigh Valley, a federally funded preschool program designed to serve children living in poverty, was searching to find a site for a preschool classroom that would meet the needs of the Head Start program and also meet the needs of the community. The Bethlehem Housing Authority and Head Start of the Lehigh Valley came together to form a partnership to serve preschool children and their families in the Lynfield community.

Head Start of the Lehigh Valley uses a multi-generational approach to the early education and learning experiences of children; the focus is not only on the children, but their families as well. They view the parents as their child's

first and most important teacher. Head Start partners with families to set attainable goals for their children and also for themselves so they will be able to succeed in learning and in life.

In the Lynfield classroom, there are 20 preschool children who range in age from 3 years to 5 years. They are nurtured and cared for by two highly qualified early childhood teachers, Denise Stahler and Lucy Muniz. The teachers and children are exploring the neighborhood and getting to know the many different faces of the BHA. BHA director Clara Kandy came to the classroom and welcomed the children and teachers by reading a story and donating the book to the classroom library. The children truly enjoyed her visit and they are looking forward to all of the new and exciting experiences to come! ▲



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FROM THE
**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR**

When you work for an organization as long as I have, one is often tempted to sit back and reminisce about how it “used to be” as compared to “how it is now”. Other than a small desk adding machine with a tape, there were no electronics to help us do our jobs. For computing a tenant’s rent, all we had was that adding machine, a #2 pencil with an eraser and the HUD form to manually list the numbers needed. Today, computers determine the rents based on the information we enter into them.

If you haven’t realized it by now, you should know that BHA is a progressive housing authority. If there is a way we can save time and money, we are always interested. If we can find new methods and procedures to improve our workmanship and our properties, we are again always interested. Cost effective management is more important than ever now, since the Federal Subsidy is being reduced more and more each year.

One such current example will be an automated procedure to keep our high rise residents informed via media announcements rather than manually passing out notices. In the coming weeks, the cable supplier to the high rise buildings will designate a TV Channel so that the information to each of the buildings is played over and over, every fifteen minutes. We will also include weather and other information as well. A study of the methods used to notify our residents, shows that the BHA Information Channel will, over time, reduce staff time and material costs.

Many other procedures will be looked at to determine if there are other positive changes we can make to assist us in our mandate to provide well maintained affordable housing.

Clara A. Kendy

Residents Share Prizes at “Most Beautiful Yard Contest” Ceremony

Nine residents shared more than \$700.00 in prize money in the 2012 “Most Beautiful Yard Contest”, at the September 14th ceremony. Entries were judged to be “best of the best” by this year’s judges, Mr. Roger Hudak and Ms. Deb Cummins. Different judges are chosen each year in order to assure fairness. The prize money is made available to reward winners and to encourage all to take extra good care of their yards. Mrs. Kendy and Mr. Gonzalez made the presentations, which included certificates and color photos of their winning entries. This year’s winners included JaviMari Reyes, Gladys Velez, Doris Blasini, Mirna Velazquez, Lourdes Torres, Clara Bauder, Herminia Bencosme, Maria Montanez and Carmen Perez. ▲



Mrs. Kendy addresses the winners.

JaviMari Reyes’ front yard is a great example of how a little attention to detail can result in a lovely appearance.





RESIDENTS' REMINDER

ZULMA RODRIGUEZ

Increasingly, we find that we must remind residents about the Energy Performance Contract (EPC) improvements and the need for tenants to not alter these mandated adjustments. **Any unauthorized alteration of any EPC improvements including plumbing, electrical and heating systems can result in eviction.** This is a rather serious matter, so I am advising all tenants to be aware. If you have any questions, you'd do well to contact the Family Development Office or the maintenance department and obtain more information.

Your storage shed provides you with a wonderful area to store seasonal items such as barbecue grills, bikes, picnic/patio furniture and more, but there are items not allowed inside the shed. There is a list posted inside the shed door, indicating what can and cannot be stored inside. Please observe these rules. Any questions should be directed to the FDD. ▲

RECREATION NEWS

- Robbie Robinson

Field Day was a big success, thanks to the efforts of our army of volunteers. The event was held under sunny skies September 8th at the First Tee Center at Marvine. We were able to utilize two basketball courts at the nearby Boy's & Girl's Club, hold bingo in air-conditioned comfort inside the FDO building and also provide some golf instruction at the award winning golf center. The participants also enjoyed free food, beverages, and of course rides, games, face painters and a bike raffle. ▲



Kids always seem mesmerized by horses. Members of BPD's mounted patrol stopped by to visit at Field Day

Sgt. Kevin Spano took time with others to pass along some golf tips to anyone interested. This year's Field Day was held at the First Tee Center.



John Ritter and Mirella Snow were among the many BHA employees who volunteered their time

This past summer, Roy Ortiz took it upon himself to organize youth at Lynfield and start a baseball training program. The group used Clemente Park, in the Lynfield community.



Meet Suzanne Balmoos

Sue joined BHA in 2012 with more than twenty years of housing experience. In her current role, she oversees both the Tenant Selection Office (TSO) and the Authority's Section 8 (Housing Choice Voucher) program. In Section 8, up to 500 vouchers are managed by the staff and tasks include interviewing applicants, calculation of rent, maintenance of a wait list, property inspections, and more. TSO responsibilities include applicant interviews, maintaining wait lists, home visits, tracking data, managing appeal hearings and more. Sue looks forward to working closely with the BHA staff and toward serving her clients in this important housing program. ▲



HIGHRISE HIGHLIGHTS

MILLIE MATOS

I can report to residents that we have learned that monthly Social Security and SSI benefits have increased by 1.7 % for 2013. This is according to the Social Security Administration. The 1.7 % is a cost of living increase and affects some 61 million Americans. This comes as welcome news since it has been about two years since the last COLA. You can learn more by contacting Social Security or by checking their website.

Here's a reminder, intended to make you a good neighbor while in our high rise buildings. Please observe the rules regarding the use of the laundry rooms. Remember not to use the facilities too early or too late, so as not to disturb others.

May will once again be "High Rise Fire Safety Month" and as part of the observances, all are required to participate in the building-wide drills. These dress rehearsals are important so that you know what to do in an emergency.

Here's an update on "BHA-TV", we have started moving ahead with this exciting and innovative program. When up and running, persons with cable access will be able to see up to the minute information having to do with life in a BHA high rise. Want to know when the next tenant council meeting is? Tune in to BHA-TV; Want to find out if there are any recreation trips planned? Tune in to BHA-TV. All this and much more, including up to the minute weather, news and music. ▲

Northampton County Free Prescription Drug Discount Card Can Be Printed Out On-Line

Since its introduction in July, 2008 the Northampton County Prescription Drug Discount Card has saved over 2,500 citizens of the county nearly \$150,000 in prescription drug costs. Thousands of free cards have been distributed through dozens of distribution sites in the county. The program is offered through a partnership with the National Association of Counties (NACo) and its prescription benefit manager Caremark.

In an effort to further expand use of the program, and to make it even easier for Northampton County residents to apply, the cards can now be printed out at home by visiting the website www.rxprintacard.biz/naco. It is a convenient method to enroll in the program, and to immediately enjoy savings on prescription drugs not covered by insurance. Information about participating pharmacies is available on this website. ▲

Colder Weather Is Here!

The maintenance department has these tips for you to help make a difference in your family's comfort this fall and winter:

- **Dress Warmly** - Even inside the house, especially at night.
- **Don't Block Radiators** - To work properly, your heat convectors and vents must not be blocked. Move drapes, carpets and furniture away from heating sources.
- **Watch For Drafts** - Eliminate the source of cold air and at the same time, prevent heat from escaping. Make sure all windows are tightly secured; remove window air-conditioners.
- **Set Your Thermostat** - Your room thermostat allows you to regulate your temperature. If you follow the rules outlined above, a temperature setting of 70 degrees should be more than sufficient to provide comfort, while saving on energy bills.

Remember, you are responsible to clear snow and ice from your porch and walk; BHA supplies snow shovels to residents...simply call the Central Supply warehouse at 610-865-8319 during regular business hours, Monday - Friday. ▲





CONSTRUCTION CHECK LIST

CURT KICHLINE

The **Marvine renovations** continue with 77 units receiving interior work. On the exterior, window replacement in the same community is coming to a close as of this writing.

The **roof replacement at Litzenberger House** is complete; we are presently enhancing security in several neighborhoods and we will soon let a contract to add some electrical outlets, necessary because of the installation of new ranges in some areas. ▲



BHA high rise residents had the opportunity to get into the holiday spirit with a performance by the Lehigh Valley Chorus (Sweet Adelines) on Dec. 3, 2102. Bartholomew House was the setting and the appreciative tenants were treated to more than thirty minutes of fine, music, both religious and secular. The group, which is comprised of women from across the Lehigh Valley, has been in business for more than fifty years. They are an award-winning aggregation, having won numerous competitions in recent years. This free event was planned by the tenant council at Bartholomew.



In Memoriam

Steve Godbolt died on September 21, 2012. His unexpected passing hit those who knew him hard because it seemed so sudden and without warning. His friends, family and the many others whose lives he touched were left wondering why he was taken at such a relatively young age. We will eventually come to accept his death, and we will be left with wonderful memories of his life, a life during which Steve impacted so many lives.

Sitting through his memorial Mass at Sts. Simon & Jude Church on September 27th, we were struck by the variety of faces, ages and different backgrounds. In attendance were very young and very old. The faces were black, Latino and Caucasian. There were men in business suits, and working people, including a letter carrier, in uniform. There were people of privilege, but mostly there were the people who appreciated Steve the most, the low-income folks who comprise the northeast Bethlehem public housing communities. We came to know Steve through his long affiliation that partnered the Northeast Ministry with the Bethlehem Housing Authority. The Steve Godbolt we knew can best be described as a true **“Renaissance man”**.

The best definition of what one means by Renaissance man is this- *“A man with wide-ranging intellect: a man who has a wide range of accomplishments and intellectual interests.”* Steve shared his wide range of interests with his kids, the ones who were entrusted to him through the Northeast Ministry programs, sponsored in part by the Bethlehem Housing Authority. Over the twenty-plus years that Steve served as director at NEM, it is safe to say that hundreds of children benefitted from his wise counsel, kindness, passion and yes, his discipline. Listening to two of the young men who grew up with Steve as part of their lives told us everything we need to know about how a single person can have so much positive impact on others. As a direct result of having been around Steve, these young men have gone to college and they intend to dedicate their lives helping others. We know of no greater legacy than that.

Steve had this message hanging on his office wall, and we quote Frederick Douglass: *“It’s easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”*

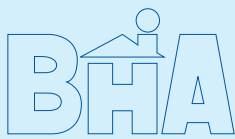
Spoken like a true Renaissance man. ▲





Bethlehem Housing Authority
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ADMINISTRATION

Clara A. Kendy,
Executive Director
 Helen Jarinko,
Executive Secretary
 Mark Iampietro,
Deputy Director
 Eugene Gonzalez,
Deputy Director

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Joseph Long
Chairman
 David Sanders
Vice Chairman
 Iris Linares
 Valerie McLendon
 Dorothy Saby
Resident Commissioner



UPCOMING EVENTS

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR
 SO YOU DON'T
 MISS OUT ON THESE
 MEETINGS
 AND ACTIVITIES!**

- Feb. 11Board Meeting, 4:30 p.m., Monocacy Tower
- Feb. 18.....BHA offices closed for Presidents' Day
- March 11Board Meeting, 4:30 p.m., Monocacy Tower
- March 13Resident Advisory Board Meeting, 2 p.m.,
 Monocacy Tower (Annual, Public Meeting)
- March 29BHA offices closed for Good Friday
- April 8.....Board Meeting, 4:30 p.m., Monocacy Tower
- May 13Board Meeting, 4:30 p.m., Monocacy Tower
- May 27BHA offices closed for Memorial Day

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

- Central Office 610-865-8300
- Central Highrise Operations Office (CHOO) Litzenberger, Bodder,
 Bartholomew and Monocacy Towers..... 610-865-8352
 OR 610-865-8353
- Central Family Development Office Pembroke, Marvine, Fairmount,
 Pfeifle, Lynfield, Parkridge and Bayard Homes..... 610-865-8342
 OR 610-865-8343
- Maintenance 610-865-8319