Youth Participate in Job Ready Program

Eleven Kennedy Heights Youth participated in Common Wealth Developments’ JobReady workshop series. The JobReady program helps young high school students prepare for their first job. The workshop series helps to take the mystery out of the job search and explains the secrets of effective job applications. It includes information about child labor laws, youths’ rights and responsibilities and types of work available to youth. At the completion of the three day workshop students participated in one on one mock interviews with volunteers. The youth completed applications, dressed to impress and excelled during their interviews.

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Energy Saving Tips From MG&E

Summer Energy Saving Tips
- Use shades and drapes to block out the sun during the day
- Use a whole house fan, room fans or ceiling fans instead of an air conditioner
- Turn off air conditioner when no one is home
- Unplug second refrigerator if not needed and save $5 to $10 per month
- Turn off appliances including computers and televisions when not in use

Jim Kidd Wins Award

By: Jody Schmitz

Jim Kidd, Kennedy Heights resident and custodian on the staff of the Community Center was awarded a recognition plaque at the Lindbergh School potluck dinner and celebration on June 3rd. Honored as “Crossing Guard Extraordinaire”. He has hung his award in a prominent place in his apartment and has taken it to show it off to friends and other people he works with in other jobs. He has showed it to his friends at the Jet Room where he works on the weekends. “I am so proud of the plaque,” he says. “It feels good when people appreciate the job I do.”

And, appreciate him they do—children and parents alike. Jim says he enjoys working with children. “I just seemed to slide right into this job.” He expects to be back at the crossing next year. And, of course, he’s bound to have a new supply of jokes.

Jim has lived at Kennedy Heights since 1986. He retired in 2002 from Oscar Mayer where he worked for 32 years. He was born in Alabama and was raised in Missouri. He has seven children and 2 grandchildren. His daughter Ebony, also lives at Kennedy Heights with his new grandson.

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- SHARE Food Program
- After School Program
- Youth Authored Grant
- Upcoming Events
- Summer Food Program
The summer solstice, the official mark of the first day of summer and the longest day of the year passed this Tuesday. For Kennedy Heights summer came a day early this year. After being closed for a week for staff training and new floors— the center reopened on Monday. New floors were not the only change; the Early Childhood Program welcomed two new children and a new assistant teacher, True Vang. The Youth Program began a half day summer program— we welcomed recent 5th grade graduates and two new program staff Jerry Overstreet and Dao Xiong.

In addition to the new permanent program staff, Darius Green, an East High School student and a graduate of the Commonwealth program referenced on the front, is assisting with summer programs and in charge of our summer food program. The center will be providing free lunch everyday from Noon—12:20 for children and youth 18 and under. Everyone is welcome but we are only able to serve during the 20 minutes lunch time.

Also starting this June the North Side has its own Farmers market. Every Sunday from 8:00—1:00 PM in the parking lot of Sherman plaza. The farmers’ market accepts quest is just a half mile from Kennedy Heights.

I want to thank everyone for welcoming me and other program staff. The homemade tapioca desert, fresh cut flowers, egg rolls hot out of the fryer, and constant offers from Girl Power girls to “do something with my hair” have made me feel welcome and excited to be working in this community.

Thank you,
Alyssa Kenney
Executive Director

Greetings from the Executive Director

The Early Childhood Program Parent Lunch

The Early Childhood Program was a lucky host of a special program called puppet PALS presented by RSVP of Dane County. Volunteers from RSVP used animal puppets to tell a series of stories that teach positive and affirming life skills. Each week the Early Childhood participants received a book that supported the week’s theme and worked with a volunteer on a puppet craft project. At the end of the project students received a book bag filled with art supplies and a certificate from RSVP.

On Thursday May 12th Kennedy Heights Early Childhood program hosted a volunteer appreciation lunch with RSVP volunteers, teachers, participants and their parents. Over 50 people and members of twelve families attended the lunch. Hot Dogs, Hmong Egg Rolls, and tamales were served. The final puppet show was performed and all the children received book bags for their new books. Thank you to all the parents and family members who attended the event. And a huge thank you to the RSVP volunteers who made the puppet PALS project possible.

ECP Accepting New Enrollment for Fall

The Early Childhood Program has a limited number of spaces available for 3—5 year old children starting this fall. Priority will be given to families that reside in the Kennedy Heights Community. Please contact Rachel Fisher for application materials 244-0767.
Delicious, Affordable Food Comes to Packer Community Center

By: Mary Kay Clark

Last week a semi-truck packed with fresh produce and other high quality, nutritious food arrived at the Packer Community Center. “Residents were delighted with the high quality of the produce,” says Jacki Thomas, program coordinator at Packer Townhouses.

“Without a grocery store nearby, people are trying to find food close to home any way they can,” Jacki commented. SHARE is a nonprofit food buying club, or co-op, which is powered by a network of over 200 volunteer food distribution teams.

By purchasing in large quantities, SHARE obtains great savings on food. Once a month, volunteer teams in communities throughout SHARE’s service area help distribute the food—contributing to even more savings.

In addition to saving money on groceries, SHARE volunteers build stronger communities. When SHARE learned of the need for convenient access to affordable groceries on the north side of Madison, it got involved to find a solution. “That really is the spirit of SHARE—helping out your neighbors,” said Rosie Loser, a member of the SHARE staff.

While there are no volunteer requirements, members are encouraged to volunteer either with their local SHARE food distribution team or elsewhere within their community. Everyone is welcome to participate in SHARE, regardless of income level.

“Now that there is a truck delivering food to the Packer Community Center every month, we would like nothing better than to fill up the truck and serve all of the surrounding residents including Kennedy Heights” Loser added.

For further information on how to sign up, call Brenda at 441-9027. Check, money order, cash or Quest card are accepted. Visit the SHARE website at www.sharewi.org call 249-0160.

After School Program Finishes Another Successful Year!

The After School Program celebrated a successful year of programming with an afternoon of games, carnival activities and a cookout. Throughout the program year the Kennedy Heights after school program served 35 children in Kindergarten through fifth grade. Parents and siblings joined in for tricycle races, a ring toss competition, and a bean bag toss. A variety of salads complimented brats and hot dogs served off the grill. Kids and families enjoyed a picnic and beautiful weather for the end of the year party.

Each day the After School Program serves between 15 and 20 children in the Kennedy Heights community. During the 2004-05 school year kids participated in Math club, gardening activities, library field trips, smart day, baking activities, homework support, arts and crafts, and many more child direct activities.

The After School Program will be accepting applications for new enrollments starting in August.

PEERSUADERS Group By: Barbie Hongmanivanh Age 12

Peersuaders is a program for middle school girls who get together and talk about issues and problems that they face in life. The PEERSUADERS program is a Girls Inc. curriculum that is currently being done by Girl Neighborhood Power in Madison. Usually we start out with the basics, and talk about things such as... drugs, alcohol, peer pressure, sexual harassment and other things too like how the media influences us.

After we learned about these things we mentored other younger kids and tell them about things that are wrong in life and things that are right in life. Right things, such as getting good grades, having close friends, and being interested in lots of things are important for young kids. We are teaching the younger girls the best that we can because we want them to grow up to be healthy. We want the girls to understand and feel that older Girl Power girls want them to stay drug and alcohol free! Teaching the younger...
Youth Authored Grant Gets Funded

In January, five middle school and high school boys meet a number of times to write a "By Youth For Youth" proposal. The boys carefully read the request for proposals and decided that they had an interest in Gang Prevention. They felt that learning about the consequences of gang membership and then teaching younger kids was something that Kennedy Heights community needed. The boys were concerned about not only kids joining gangs but also about kids emulating gang membership and pretending to be gang members.

The Kennedy Heights proposal "Stoppin' the Poppin'" was awarded $1000 to do gang prevention activities that includes interviewing former gang members and producing an educational video.

Kamonzi Turner and Gary Howard accepted the grant at an award ceremony hosted at United Way of Dane County in late April.

Summer Food Program

June 20th—August 12th Kennedy Heights Community Center is participating in the summer food program. We will be offering lunch and a snack to all children under 18. Lunch will be served from 12:00—12:20 every day and snack will be served from 3:45—4:00 PM. We are only able to serve during these times.