

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

a bulletin for Cumberland Plateau Regional Housing Authority residents



Special guest

Children at Centennial Heights in Haysi enjoyed a special visitor during the annual holiday dinner there on Dec. 20. Santa Claus, played by resident Steven Mullins, was on hand to deliver holiday cheer. Here, 4-year-old Jackson Turner shares his wish list with the jolly old elf.

New year, new goals

Program aims to help residents target success

As we begin a new year, many of us may have penned a list of resolutions or set our sights on self-improvement in 2017. If you're a resident at one of Cumberland Plateau Regional Housing Authority's properties and are interested in identifying education, career or other goals to help you become more self-sufficient this year, the authority's Resident Opportunities and Self Sufficiency program may be able to help.

see **GOALS** on reverse side

Resident advisory board offers input on annual plan

More parking spaces at Town Square in Honaker, sink and bathtub replacements at Centennial Heights in Haysi and landscaping at Fox Meadow in Lebanon are just a few of the suggested needs voiced last month by Cumberland Plateau Regional Housing Authority's Resident Advisory Board members.

The board met Dec. 7 at Bonanza in Lebanon. Public housing authorities are required to establish at least one resident advisory board, or RAB, as part of the PHA plan process. Among RAB roles is to provide input and make recommendations on the housing authority's annual plan. Cumberland Plateau RAB includes residents of each of the authority's properties in Dickenson, Russell and Tazewell counties. Seven

representatives were in attendance at the December meeting.

During an overview of CPRHA's Five-Year/Annual Plan 2017, executive director Keith L. Viers identified roof replacement at Fox Meadow and authority-wide appliance replacement where needed as major projects for the year.

Advisory board members offered several suggestions about other needs at their respective locations. Suggestions ranged from the need for shrubbery trimming to interior painting of some units.

Mr. Viers expressed appreciation to the members, noting that their comments are valuable in the authority's planning process.

Emergency heating assistance available

This time of year, many of us find ourselves more financially strapped than usual. The holidays brought extra expenses; colder weather means higher heating bills; and seasonal sickness can create unexpected healthcare costs. Some may be faced with the tough challenge of deciding whether to pay for utilities, rent, food or medical bills. For those who find themselves in a heating emergency situation, the Virginia Department of Social Services offers assistance to those who qualify.

The agency's crisis assistance program can help with heat security deposits, utility heating bills, repair or replacement of heating equipment, primary heating fuel or emergency shelter. The program offers help when

needs aren't met through fuel assistance and other resources.

The application deadline for assistance is March 15.

For more information, contact your local social services department:

- Dickenson County, 120 Clover Street, Clintwood, (276) 926-1661;
- Russell County, 79 Rogers Street, Lebanon, (276) 889-3031;
- Tazewell County, 253 Chamber Drive, Tazewell, (276) 988-8500.

You may also apply for crisis heating assistance online at www.commonhelp.virginia.gov.

Take steps to save energy at home year round

Plummeting temperatures means rising utility bills. If you're looking for ways to save energy this winter or any time of year, Virginia Energy Sense, a State Corporation Commission program, offers a variety of tips.

AROUND THE HOUSE

- The biggest energy consumption in your home – typically more than half – is from your heating and cooling equipment. Set your thermostat at 78 degrees during summer and 68 degrees during winter.

- In the bathroom, instead of filling the tub to take a bath, take a shower. Plus, if you reduce your shower time, you use less hot water, which will help save even more.

- Water heating is the second biggest energy consumption in your home. The typical water heater can cost up to \$8 per person, per month to operate. To help save energy, set the temperature of your

water heater at 120 degrees.

- In the kitchen, run the dishwasher only when you have a full load and let the dishes air dry when finished. This helps save hot water and electricity.

- Chargers used for cell phones, laptops and other electronic equipment use energy even when they are not connected to the device. Unplug them when not in use.

- Dress for savings. Wearing warm layered clothing during the winter and light clothing during the summer may help you keep the thermostat at more efficient temperatures.

REFRIGERATORS & FREEZERS

- Make sure the door seals are tight. If you can slip a piece of paper between the door frame and the gasket, you've got a leak.

- Set your refrigerator between 35

and 38 degrees Fahrenheit and your freezer to 3 degrees Fahrenheit.

- Cover foods stored in the refrigerator. Moisture from uncovered food makes the compressor work harder.

- Keep your refrigerator and freezer full of food to reduce the need to cool empty spaces.

OVENS

- Keep pre-heating to a minimum or avoid all together.

- Avoid checking your food by opening the door.

- Allow your oven to multi task. Bake several items at once and stagger the items to make sure air can flow through the oven.

- Use glass and ceramic pans; they allow you to reduce the heat while cooking just as well.

Goals

The free program can help CPRHA residents set goals – from furthering their education to acquiring job training – and links them with resources to achieve them, with the ultimate aim of gaining economic independence.

To learn more about how the program may help you, contact ROSS coordinator Paula Culbertson at CPRHA's Lebanon office at (276) 889-4910 or pculbertson@bvunet.net.