

NEWSLETTER

ST GEORGE COMMUNITY HOUSING LTD



APRIL 2010

WINNER OF 2008 NSW AWARDS IN COMMUNITY HOUSING FOR OVERALL EXCELLENCE

2010 SGCH Education Bursary Scheme



The SGCH 2010 Education Bursary Scheme awards ceremony was held on 26 February 2010.

Students in primary, secondary and tertiary education applied and in total 64 bursaries were awarded. Congratulations to all the winners!

This year, SGCH received \$5000 towards the scheme from Bonnyrigg Partnerships.

Daniel Fedson from Bonnyrigg Partnership (BP) was on hand to present bursaries to the Bonnyrigg winners.

Thank you BP for making this great contribution that allowed 10 additional recipients this year!

Deputy Mayor of Hurstville City Council, Councillor Con Hindi, was another special guest who presented the awards to the tertiary students.

Thank you to Daen Phillips and Melissa Nicholl who spoke about receiving a bursary and also to our assessment panel that included our Board Member Ike Ellis and Tenant Advisory Group Member Beris Bradford.

Events Review



Webb St Competition Pg4



EcoWise Project Pg2



Kids Colouring Competition P2

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Chinese Tenant Group

The first meeting for the year was held on 19 February 2010; just in time to celebrate Chinese New Year!

If you are interested in joining the Chinese Tenant Group, please contact James Kim on 9585 1499 for more details.

Congratulations to Rowa Omari & family on their new arrival!

SGCH wish to congratulate Rowa and her family on the arrival of their baby boy Jayden in December 2009



EcoWise Project Follow up



The September 2009 issue of the newsletter reported on the EcoWise Project at Walpole Street. Local traditional artist Darren Ritchie was invited back to help the children paint the garden beds again. Elizabeth, from the

Botanic Gardens Trust Community Greening Team, has been running regular workshops on gardening and has also provided seeds, pots and helpful tips on growing plants and vegetables. **Thank you Elizabeth!**

Property Transfer Program

SGCH would like to welcome all of our new property transfer tenants from Menai who have recently transferred from Housing NSW. The Property Transfer Program (PTP) started in September 2009 and we are pleased to announce that over 60% of the Menai-nominated properties have transferred to SGCH.

The PTP program aims to provide improved housing options for Public Housing tenants and grow the Community Housing sector. Again, we would like to thank all our new tenants for their co-operation and assistance during the transition period and SGCH looks forward to welcoming more tenants each week!

Kids Colouring Competition

Thank you to all the children who entered the competition.

The judges had a difficult time choosing the winners as the standard of the entries were very high.

After much discussion, three winners were chosen — congratulations to Haina Wang, Selina Chiem and Tamara Badraddine on being the winners of the competition. They each received a \$50 voucher from Toys R Us, together with a Winner's Certificate from SGCH.

All children who entered the competition will receive a Participation Certificate and a letter in the mail.



White Goods Loan Scheme

The White Goods Loan Scheme is a \$500 no interest loan offered to SGCH tenants to purchase white goods. The 2010 scheme opened on 26 March 2010 and closes on 7 May 2010.

Please contact Reception on 9585-1499 or go to www.sgch.com.au to obtain a copy of the application form

TAG Meeting

The next SGCH Tenant Advisory Group (TAG) meeting will be held on 13 April 2010 at The Kanyana Room, Hurstville Civic Theatre, MacMahon St Hurstville. New TAG Members are always welcome.

Please contact James Kim on 9585 1499 if you would like to attend.

Australia's Biggest Morning Tea 27 May 2010

SGCH will be participating in Australia's Biggest Morning Tea on 27 May 2010 to raise funds for the Cancer Council. Since it began in 1994, over \$70 million has been raised and SGCH will be actively involved to contribute this year. Please contact James Kim on 9585 1499 if you are interested in participating in this event.

Pathways

The 27th of April 2010 marks the beginning of a new era in access to social housing in NSW with the implementation of "Housing Pathways". Housing Pathways is a common access system which allows all social housing providers (public and community) to allocate from one common Housing Register and allows applicants to access housing services from one access point of their choosing. This means that an applicant can come to an SGCH office and update their change of circumstances for housing without having to retell their story to a number of housing providers, making the housing application process simpler and more client focused.

Harmony Day

SGCH and Chinese Australian Services Society (CASS) hosted a free concert to mark Harmony Day. The theme "Living Together" was celebrated by SGCH tenants and CASS clients showcasing their talents in front of 120 people at the Civic Theatre, Hurstville. CASS clients performed Traditional Chinese Folk Dance and Tai Chi Performance; SGCH tenant Frida Anderson sang songs including the show-stopping "Respect"; Manjia Luo played her own compositions on Violin and Martha Szabo recited her own reflection of "Harmony" with Manjia Luo providing background music on piano. Thank you all for participating, it was a culturally rich experience enjoyed by all and we look forward to seeing more talented tenants in the future.

From the CEO



Firstly, I'm delighted to be able to formally welcome the first of our tenants to the City of Canada Bay Council's Affordable Living Program properties.

These 20 properties are in the Canada Bay Local Government Area and are for key workers. Canada Bay Council has offered six of the properties to a partnership with Concord Repatriation General Hospital to house hospital staff. Our partnership with Council is the first of its kind as it involves funding from Commonwealth, State and Local Governments.

Thank you to our tenants who gave their time to tell their stories and be photographed for the SGCH 2009 Annual Report. Copies of the Annual Report are available from our office if you have not received one. The SGCH 2009 Annual General Meeting was held on 30 November 2009. Congratulations to our new and returning Board Members: Dennis Cafe, Wayne Carter, Ike Ellis, Joan Ferguson, Salah Kahil, Graham Millett, Graham Rowson, David Thrift, Karen Walsh and Trevor Wetmore. The Board is an experienced and dedicated group of people who are here to govern the organisation and represent the needs of its members.

Many of you will know our Tenant Advisory Group Chair, Kim Sowter. Kim has been selected through a competitive process as a representative on the inaugural Social Housing Tenant Advisory Committee — Congratulations Kim! The Committee is made up of 12 social housing residents from Public, Community and Aboriginal housing. Committee members offer advice and input to Housing NSW, based on their knowledge and experience as social housing tenants, and are committed to working towards achieving a better future for our community.

Congratulations also to Rowa Omari, our Community Development Officer. Rowa and her family welcomed their new son and brother, Jayden, in December. Other good news comes from our Senior Housing Manager at Bonnyrigg, Poppy Bethanis, who announced her engagement in January. Poppy and her partner Matt are looking forward to their wedding in October this year.

A recent achievement for the organisation was the successful application to become the Tenancy Manager for the Social Housing component of the Riverwood North Urban Renewal Project. This is exciting news for our organisation and the Riverwood community as the project will provide 150 units specifically designed to accommodate ageing residents.

Since the last newsletter, SGCH has prepared bids to substantially increase our portfolio as part of the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan and Title Transfer (Federal and State Government Initiatives). The increase in properties will give us an opportunity to acquire more Affordable Housing as well as assist those people who are waiting for housing or transfers.

In approaching the end of the financial year, I, together with the staff of SGCH, assess the year past and plan for the year ahead. It is also a good time to assess what is important in one's personal life and I encourage you to consider your health and happiness and what you need to do to achieve that.

SGCH encourages tenants to make suggestions. I would personally like to invite any tenants who have ideas for improving our services to feel free to make contact with us. Things as simple as suggesting changes to the web site or commenting on our Reception area really help us stay in touch with how we are seen by our applicants, new and existing tenants.

Warmest wishes
Nazha Saad Chief Executive Officer



TAG Christmas Party

TAG Christmas party was going to be held at Ramsgate Beach on 9 December 2009 but due to bad weather, the party was moved to the Hurstville Civic Centre.

Members enjoyed lunch and swapped Kris Kringle gifts with each other and SGCH's Chairman, Dennis Cafe, attended to hand out Certificates of Appreciation to all members of TAG and met up with some familiar faces.

Pictured is TAG member Joseph Delaney and Dennis Cafe.



Webb Street Gardening Competition

Since the garden beds were put in at the beginning of 2009, tenants at Webb Street have been busy cultivating fruit and vegetables and sharing the harvest with each other.

On 14 October 2009, SGCH's Housing Management and Community Development teams held a competition to judge the garden beds and their gardeners. There were strawberries, corn, potatoes, tomatoes, chillies, a variety of lettuces, zucchini, pumpkin, cucumber, radishes,

herbs and sun flowers. The amount of effort and work that went into maintaining the garden was obvious and was achieved with very little equipment as there was not even a garden hose on the site! SGCH donated a garden hose, with all the necessary fittings, to assist in the continued production of all this produce. Congratulations Greg Kirkpatrick for winning the competition and thanks also to Greg for providing tomatoes and potatoes for people to take home!



SGCH Rent Incentive Scheme Winner



Did you know that all tenants whose rent is paid two weeks in advance at the end of each calendar month will go into a draw to win one of two \$100 shopping vouchers.

Maria Franciso, from Bonnyrigg, won a \$100 Woolworths voucher last month.



Smoke Alarm Testing for Capital Properties



As part of SGCH's ongoing commitment to tenants' safety, testing of the smoke alarms in Capital properties will be carried out over the coming months.

Smoke alarms are designed to provide an early warning of fire and have contributed to saving hundreds, if not thousands, of lives in Australia.

All homes in NSW are required by law to have at least one working

smoke alarm installed on each level of the dwelling.

You will be contacted by our contractors, K&G Electrical Services, to arrange a date and time for your alarm(s) to be tested. If you have any queries about this program, please contact your Housing Manager who will be able to advise if your property will be inspected.

Namatjira Christmas Party



SGCH, the University of NSW's Community Development Project, Housing NSW and the Namatjira Community Centre combined forces to put on a Christmas BBQ for all the tenants. SGCH provided 30 gift bags containing toys and lollies for children on the estate.

It was great to see the four organisations combining resources for the benefit of the tenants.