

Neighborhood Health Advocate

West Hill

News of the Neighborhood Health Advocate Program

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A Joint Program of Albany Guardian Society and The Community Foundation for the Capital Region

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Supporting Organizations

Koinonia Health Care
The Elder Network of the
Capital Region
University at Albany
The Sage Graduate School
NYS Office for the Aging

In Cooperation with

The West Hill Ministers
Fellowship



Spring is Here!



In this Issue...

- In this newsletter, you'll find:
- Health advice for spring
 - News on NHAP registered nurse interns
 - Information on the West Hill Improvement Corp.
 - Date and time for Carnival on the Hill—2004

Spring into Warm Weather

Ahh, Spring!
Finally, we can enjoy the warmer weather, the flowers, and the green grass. While we're all so delighted that spring is here, it is also important to be aware of some health concerns so that we are able to stay healthy and enjoy this wonderful season.

While bees are great for flowers and plants, their stings are not good for humans. If you know you are allergic to bee stings or develop signs including swelling face, difficulty breathing, weakness, or cold clammy skin, call 911. If you have an epinephrine kit, get it out and follow the directions.

If you are not allergic to bee stings, make sure that you remove the

stinger. Pull it out with tweezers, or scrape it off the skin using a straight edged object like a license or credit card. Apply ice to decrease pain and swelling.

Mosquitoes can cause much discomfort and may carry West Nile Virus. People who are over 50 are especially at risk for the most serious complications. The best plan of attack is prevention. Avoid being outside from dusk until dawn, the prime mosquito hours. Wear long sleeves and pants. Spray insect repellent on clothing and not on skin. Remove any standing water in gutters, old tires, birdbaths, etc., and change pet water bowls frequently. Make sure your screens are well fitting.

Spring, unfortunately, also means allergy season. If you have a runny itchy nose, watery itchy eyes, sneezing, and itchy skin, you may have an allergy. Mold, pollen, dust, and pet dander are major causes of allergies. Cover mattresses and pillow with allergy proof covers. Avoid feather and down. Keep the windows closed. Dehumidifiers and HEPA air cleaners are useful. Avoid cigarette smoke and heavy perfumes. Ask your doctor about antihistamines.

All of us at the Neighborhood Health Advocate Program wish you a healthy and enjoyable spring season!

*Information provided by
Kathleen Johnson, R.N.*

Graduate Nursing Students Join Intern Staff

This past fall registered nurses from The Sage Colleges Graduate School joined the Neighborhood Health Advocate Program as a new group of RN's in the community. These student interns work with the Koinonia Health Care RN's, under the

direction of Barbara Pieper, Ph.D., RN, Associate Professor of Nursing, and round out the professional interns working in the Lay Advocate program. These students are registered nurses who are studying community health through Sage's School of Nursing and

Health Sciences and are taking courses toward completing their master's degree in nursing. As part of their course work, graduate nursing students intern in area agencies to gain experience in promoting the health of communities.

See Student Interns on page 2

**NEWS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH
ADVOCATE PROGRAM**

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Student Interns *continued from page 1*

In the Neighborhood Health Advocate Program, student interns are working with staff to develop health education information on health-related topics such as promoting home safety, preparing for the winter season and dealing with warm weather issues such as allergies and insect bites. Other activities include investigating community health resources, assisting with the evolution and evaluation of the NHAP program, and supporting the lay advocates, while offering their advice and expertise on health matters.

This is a unique educational experience for social work and graduate nursing interns to work together along with the community in this innovative health and social program.


The Carnival is Coming!

The Carnival is coming to the Hill — to West Hill!

Plans are underway for The Annual Carnival on the Hill— 2004 which will be held on August 21, 2004, from 12 noon to 5:00 p.m., on the corner of Judson and Second Streets.

Neighbors, service providers, and all others are welcome to attend the celebration of the West Hill Neighborhood! We hope you'll join your friends and neighbors at this special event.

Please contact NHAP if you have any questions.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The Carnival on the Hill

August 21, 2004

12 noon to 5:00 p.m.

Corner of Judson and Second Streets

Agency Improves Quality of Life in West Hill

Perhaps you've noticed the green house on the corner of North Lake Avenue and Elk Street which houses the West Hill Improvement Corporation (WHIC). The Neighborhood Health Advocate Program team has been impressed with WHIC's quality of service and dedication to the West Hill neighborhood and we wanted to learn more about this organization.

We asked Mae Sydnor, office manager of WHIC, about the agency's strong commitment to West Hill. "I was born and raised in this neighborhood," said Mae, "and have a personal investment in it." Mae and Towanna Ramdene, WHIC's executive director, enjoy helping people in our neighborhood and are delighted to see neighbors dedicated to West Hill.

WHIC was founded by West Hill Neighborhood Association volunteers in 1976 and was initially located on First Street. Ten years ago it moved to its present location at 117 North Lake Avenue. WHIC provides a variety of services to improve neighbors' quality of life in West Hill that range from installing grab bars in the bathroom to home buying assistance.

WHIC also provides information on housing. Landlords notify WHIC about available rental properties and tenants call about places to rent in West Hill. WHIC has a grant from the City of Albany to assist homeowners with interior repairs for up to \$1,000 for labor and material.

About 36 households took advantage of this generous opportunity last year.

Another great service from WHIC is the First Time Home Buyers program. The agency encourages the purchase of homes and assists with referrals to lawyers, contractors and inspectors. Soon there will be financial assistance available to the West Hill homebuyers.

If you require assistance from WHIC or have questions about any of its programs, Mae and Towanna can be reached at **462-6469**. They look forward to hearing from you and will assist you in improving the quality of life for those living in West Hill.



*Mae Sydnor of the West Hill
Improvement Corporation*