



Planning for the Holidays

By Jorge Alvarado

With the holiday season just around the corner, it is easy to get carry away with special offers from department stores, payday loans and the many credit card offers that come in the mail. We all spend more money during the holidays, but planning ahead will keep expenses to a minimum and reduce the stress of dealing with debt headaches after the parties are over. Here are some basics on planning for the holiday season. Get everyone in your household, no matter the age, involved. What they learn now will set the stage for how they spend money later. (See page 4 for ideas on teaching elementary-age children about money.)

Plan a Realistic Budget

Start setting a budget by identifying money you can count on after you have deducted your monthly expenses (rent, utilities, child care, etc.). Do not include pending approvals from a personal loan or credit cards since you eventually will have to pay it back.

Gift Shopping

Set a gift limit. Decide how much you want to spend on each gift before heading to the mall. If you are having a hard time deciding what to buy, consider buying a gift card - it will help keep your budget on track.

Sales and Discounts

Take advantage of early sales and discounts offered by stores and avoid last minute impulse purchases. With the holiday season starting earlier every year, many stores are already sending out sales information to attract early shoppers.

Know How Your Spending Affects Your Credit

Use credit cards with low APRs (annual percentage rates). If your APR is too high, call the credit company and ask to have it lowered. In many cases, it pays off to ask! Also, try to keep your balance to below 50% of the available credit. When you owe more than 50%, your credit score drops. This prevents you from being able to negotiate better APR's, receive low interest rates on loans and in general hurts your buying power.

Need Financial Guidance or Help Budgeting for the Holidays?

As a PCRI resident you have free access to financial workshops, one-on-one credit counseling and assistance in setting up long- and short-term budgets. Call us or come in to find out more.

capacity for the future. Thank you for your invaluable support!

Want to get a jump on budgeting for the holidays? PCRI offers residents a FREE copy of their credit report.

Are you a federal employee? Please consider donating a payroll deduction to PCRI's programs during the annual Combined Federal Campaign that ends Dec. 15. Enter PCRI's ID #7965 on your pledge form.

PCRI is offering a free homeownership workshop

on Saturday,

November 20 from 10:00 am 1:00 pm at Friends of the Children (enter from NE Stanton parking lot). Child care and refreshments will be provided. Call Jorge to reserve a spot.

The Neighborhood Partnership Fund recently awarded PCRI's Programs Department with a \$20,000 grant to build



Cam, Home Depot team captain, Maxine Fitzpatrick, Becky Blumer from Hands on Portland, Della Jones from Hands on Network of Atlanta and Lisa Schlenker, Home Depot associate and Olympic athlete (rowing).

Hands on Portland - Home Depot Day

On September 28, 75 Home Depot volunteers teamed with Hands On Portland, a volunteer agency, to improve three PCRI properties located around NE Alberta. This effort was done in honor of Home Depot's Week of Service, when associates throughout the U.S., Canada, Mexico and China donated more than 250,000 volunteer hours for hundreds of local community improvement projects.

Each property received extensive landscaping, while volunteers painted one home's exterior, erected a children's play structure and built patio covers on a second property and repaired a porch and painted the interior of a third home. Many thanks to the NE Glisan St. Starbucks for its generous donation of morning coffee.



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Living Paycheck to Paycheck

Sixty percent of Americans have no savings and are totally dependent on their next paycheck to meet their living expenses. If you fit into that category, you are not alone. And not all who fit into this category are low-income earners: one-third makes \$75,000 or more a year.



Relief can be as close as cutting back on those items you purchase, such as vending machine snacks, coffee to go, fast food, lottery tickets and cigarettes. Figure out what you spend on such items and you will be surprised to see that you can save big bucks every month from the money you blow on unnecessary little expenditures. If you think this does not apply to you, I challenge you to try it anyway. It may be enlightening!

If you don't splurge on little things but you regularly max out your credit cards, burrowing deeper into debt to maintain a lifestyle your paycheck can't cover, you can still climb off the paycheck to paycheck treadmill with five simple strategies:

1. Slash Credit Card Debt

If you pay the minimum required on your credit card, it can take years to pay it off. For ex., if you owe \$2,000 on a card with an 18% APR, it will take 30 years to pay it off if you only pay the minimum amount! One way to get rid of credit card debt quickly is to pay more on the card with the highest APR each month while paying less on the others. Continue this for the next credit card. Keep in mind that this will only work if you avoid running up more debt.

“You can save if you make a conscious effort to monitor yourself and cut spending.”

2. Set Financial Goals

If you don't know where you are going, you'll never get there. Identify your short- and long-term goals and set an action plan to make it happen. Name specific steps you'll take to reach your financial goal, such as bringing your lunch from home at least four days a week, or buying regular coffee instead of more costly brews. Write your goals down and review them regularly. If you fall off, don't stay off – gather your composure and resume the process.

3. Live Below Your Means

Living below your means requires spending on what you need, not on what you want. If you take home \$25,000 a year, spend like you earn \$22,000. Use the other \$3,000 to pay off credit card debt, create an emergency fund or save for a down payment on a home.

4. Pay Yourself First

Before you pay rent (yes, rent), bills or car loan, have at least 10% of your paycheck automatically deducted to go into a savings account, 401(k) or individual retirement account (IRA). This will discipline you and guarantees that money is being invested for your family's financial future.

5. Explore other Options

Supplement your income by finding a better-paying job or part-time work, and earmark the additional money for paying down debts. For credit counseling or debt-reduction services, contact the non-profit National Foundation for Credit Counseling or Jorge Alvarado here at PCRI, and he can provide you with this information.

“A budget is to money as diet is to food.”

Good luck,

Maxine

PCRI Updates

PCRI's Policy on Satellite Dishes

According to your lease section 9(I) "...as required by federal law, satellite dishes may be allowed but cannot be attached to any portion of the landlord's property." That includes the roof and sides of the property. The satellite dish company may provide a pole specifically for the dish. If the property is damaged, you will be held responsible for repair.

Correct Address

Please make sure your correct name and address are written on your check. If the correct information is not on your check, it may not get posted to your account and you may receive a late fee.

Writing A Check To Pay Your Rent?

Please make sure your correct address is written on the check, as well as if someone is paying rent on your behalf with their personal check. If the correct information is not written on the check, it may not get posted to your account, and you may receive a late fee and a notice for non-payment of rent.

RESIDENT REFERRAL BONUS

Earn \$75 by referring a friend. That's right! Refer a friend or family member to PCRI and if s/he is approved and moves into a PCRI home successfully, you will receive a \$75 credit towards your account. To receive your credit, make sure that they write your name on the top of the application next to, "How did you hear about PCRI?" That way we know to give the credit to you. It's that easy!



Maintenance

Hello residents,

It's that time of year when the cold wet weather sets in, and PCRI maintenance starts getting a lot of calls for weatherization measures. With natural gas rates increasing 20% this year, here are some steps to help improve the heating in your home:

1. Clean or replace your furnace filter every three months during the cold season. When your furnace filter is dirty and clogged, the furnace has to work harder and longer to heat your home.
2. Temporarily caulk shut all windows that are not regularly used. Or, use removable pliable rope cord to press into gaps around the sashes of your egress windows. (Egress windows are those used for escape in the event of a fire.)
3. Make sure weather stripping and sweeps on the doors are sealing well.
4. Adjust the damper covers in your heating ducts to heat rooms that are used more while directing less heat to rooms that do not need it.

Please note that PCRI does not provide window coverings as they are expensive, difficult to remove and cause paint surface damage.

Other tips to save energy (from PGE):

- Turn down the heat to 68 when you're at home and to 60 at bedtime or while you're at work.
- On clear days, open the curtains on the sunny side of the house to increase the indoor temperature.
- Don't run the hot water when you're shaving or washing the dishes.
- Turn the lights off when you leave the room.

Also, please call if your gutters are overflowing during heavy rains and need cleaning. Don't rake leaves into the street – either deposit them in your yard debris container or drop them off at one of the City's leaf depots.

Thanks everyone! Stay warm and safe.

Regards,
Bryant Edwards, *Maintenance Supervisor*

Spotlight on Families



The Nutcracker

The Oregon Ballet has awarded 30 tickets to PCRI to see the Nutcracker this year. The Nutcracker is an enchanting Christmas tale about a young girl named Clara, a magical world where toys come to life, a beautiful Snow Queen and more. If you are interested in attending with your family members, please call PCRI to sign up.

Holiday Bikes

For the second year in a row, PCRI is participating in the Community Cycling Holiday Bike Giveaway this year. Children age three to eight who do not already have a bicycle are eligible. If you are interested in enrolling your child in the Bike Giveaway please contact Arika by November 24. You will need to tell her your name and your child(ren)'s name(s), age(s) and height(s).

PCRI's Annual Holiday Card

As every year, PCRI is holding a holiday art contest for resident children ages 12. Check PCRI's winter newsletter for pictures of the winners and a listing of runner-ups.

PCRI's Programs Department would like to thank the sponsors of our first-ever roller skating party. The food and drinks they provided helped make our party a hit! We can't wait to do it again!



Pepsi Cola

PCRI staff enjoys an afternoon of skating with residents.

Family Calendar

December 2 – 31:

12th Annual Kwanzaa Exhibition: Mixed media group show and Kuumba celebration. Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, 5340 North Interstate Avenue; (503) 823-4322.

December 10 – 11:

Screening of "Imagining Home: Stories of Columbia Villa," a locally produced documentary about the oldest public housing development in Portland and the progress of its rehabilitation. Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, 5340 North Interstate Avenue; (503) 823-4322.

Dec. 20 – 23

and Dec. 27 – 31:

Winter Zooventure Daycamps for children in grades K-3. Full and half day sessions are available. Call (503) 220-2781 for more information or to register.

January 21:

Parenting workshop "Strong Parents, Strong Kids" at the Children's Museum Admission is free to adults and child care is available. Call (503)471-9920 for more information or to reserve child care.

A Penny Earned, A Penny Saved: Teaching Your Elementary Age Child about Money

There are many things you can do to help your children develop healthy financial habits and avoid serious economic pitfalls in adulthood. Children are natural learners and see the influence of money all around them. Here are some basic concepts to begin discussing with your elementary age (K-2) child.

Earning. You interact with businesses with your child all the time. Your son or daughter sees the person ringing up groceries at the supermarket, the teacher, principal and administrative staff at school, bank tellers, TV news reporters and more every day. Young students may not understand that people do these things to earn money to buy the things that they need or want. Explain that different amounts of money are earned for different positions, and sometimes we cannot buy the things that we want right away because there are so many things we need and only a small amount of money. For larger wants we need to save up. This idea can be reinforced by giving an allowance (if that fits your budget) or having the child do small chores to earn funds, like cleaning a friend's yard for a dollar.

Saving. Your child may already be familiar with some of the basic ideas of saving if they had a piggy bank in pre-school or kindergarten. Now that they are a little older, consider opening a savings account for them. They can deposit part of their allowance in the bank, or birthday money, money earned from chores or other gifts.

Sharing. One way to teach sharing is to encourage your child to give some part of their allowance or their money to your church or favorite charity. Sometimes there is very little cash to spare you can model sharing with others in the community by

Continued on page 6





Focus on Park Terrace

Interested in Homeownership?
Join us for a free workshop on Sunday, December 5 from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm in the Community Center. Free credit report also included. Sign up with Margaret today!



The Chargettes entertain Park Terrace residents during the summer picnic.

Thank You!
Park Terrace Community Center would like to thank Beaver Janitorial Service in advance for their generous donation of Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings and dessert to Park Terrace residents!

Upcoming Events

- Friday Night Wind-Down
Fridays from 4:00 - 7:30 pm
- Thanksgiving Banquet
November 18
- Christmas Party and Banquet
December 23



Park Terrace Grievance Procedure

PCRI would like to take a moment to remind Park Terrace residents about the grievance process they must follow. Every attempt is made to address and resolve a resident's complaint at the site level with Lucy Diaz, the Site Manager. When a resident has a complaint involving their unit, another tenant or any other situation related to the property, the complaint should be addressed to Lucy Diaz, preferably in writing, signed and dated.

If the complaint involves a maintenance request, the problem must be written on a Maintenance Request Form, which identifies the unit, the maintenance need, time reported, resident authorization to perform the repairs without the presence of the resident, the time completed and the Manager's signature authenticating the repair.

Continued on page 6

Resident Survey

Park Terrace residents were recently asked to share their opinions about Park Terrace's resident services. Here is what you shared with us about who you are and what services you would like to see at the Community Center:

About You:

- You range in tenancy from less than one year to 23 years!
- Your primary language is: English (53%), Oromo (21%), Tigrinya/Amharic (16%) and Spanish (10%).
- There are seven families with children, ages ranging from newborn to 4.
- The majority of you, 36%, range from 18-30 years of age. A little over one-quarter are between 50-70 years of age, while another 24% are between 70-90 years old. Twelve percent of residents are 30-40 years and 40-50, equally divided.

social environment to be the biggest attraction. You come to the Center to visit with neighbors and use the computers.

- Your biggest complaint about the Center includes the scheduling of activities; primarily which are for children and which are for adults.
- We received many suggestions for workshops and speakers to invite, including: computer training, faith-based topics, exercise/diet program, communicating with others, how to start a small business, arts and crafts, reading club, diversity training and maintaining one's apartment.
- Lots of good movie and game suggestions came in!

Many, many thanks for taking the time to share your thoughts. We are in the process of developing a schedule of activities for the Community Center that will be posted publicly. As well, stay tuned for workshops being led by community partners.

The Community Center:

- Most of you have visited the Community Center and found the

Lucy Diaz, Site Manager (503) 282-6111
Karen Sexton, Property Manager (971) 244-0293
Harry Matsumoto, Vice-President (971) 244-0292 ext 111
Doug Repman, President (971) 244-0292 ext 0

Community Resources

A Penny Saved...

Continued from page 4

giving your time. Encourage your child to give of themselves and to look at the areas in which others need help and think about what s/he has to offer.

Is your daughter a math whiz? Maybe she can help a cousin with his math homework. Is your son an up-and-coming musician? Maybe he can put on a show for some friends.

Grievance...

Continued from page 5

In the situation where the complaint is against the Site Manager, the complaint can be made to Karen Sexton, Property Manager. If the problem is not, or cannot be resolved by, or if the problem involves the Property Manager, the resident may contact the President of QMS, Inc.

Inquiries directed to PCRI's main office or the Park Terrace Community Center Resident Coordinator will be referred to this procedure.

After-hours Emergencies

What is considered an emergency? A fire (call 911 immediately), flood, no heat in the winter, no electricity when your neighbors have power, toilet is plugged, broken window or door lock or you are locked out.

How to contact the managers: There are two ways to contact the site managers after regular business hours for an emergency:

1. Call the pager, (503) 204-1578. You will be prompted to enter a numeric message after the tone. The numeric message is your phone number. After entering your phone number, hang up. Your call will be sent to the pager Junior carries.
2. Call the Park Terrace office, (503) 282-6111. Calls are forwarded to Lucy's cell phone in the evening.

QMS would like to express their thanks to Margaret Beasley for helping with resident concerns for the past year. Now that you have two phone numbers to contact the managers, Margaret will no longer need to be contacted in the evenings and on weekends. Margaret is a PCRI employee and should only be contacted for matters concerning the community center.

PCRI e-news

features local events, financial assistance, free family activities and employment opportunities sent directly to your e-mail. If you have not yet received PCRI e-news, send an e-mail to loreta@pcrihome.org.

New Community Resource

The North Portland Tool Library is a new community resource that loans a wide variety of tools to residents of Portsmouth, St. Johns, Kenton and Arbor Lodge neighborhoods. The tool library will loan garden and hand tools, among other things, for up to a week. It's located in the basement of the historic Kenton Firehouse, 8105 N Brandon. Call Ken Shipley or Jason Hatch at (503) 823-0209 for more information.

RENTAL PAYMENT ASSISTANCE

(Reprinted from PCRI's Resident Resource Guide. Please drop by our office for a copy.)

Albina Ministerial Alliance (AMA) –
(Inner N/NE areas)
(503) 240-0828

Cascade AIDS Project (CAP)
620 SW 5th Ave, #300
(503) 223-2437
www.cascadeaids.org

Housing Authority of Portland (HAP)
(Section 8, vouchers)
135 SW Ash
(503) 802-8333
www.hapdx.org

Portland Impact – (Inner SE area)
(503) 988-6000

St. Vincent DePaul
(503) 235-8431 (NE and SE areas)
(503) 233-5589 (N Area)

William Temple House
(metro area)
(503) 226-3021

YWCA Housing and Enrichment Resources
(N Portland)
(503) 721-6762



2004 PCRI Board of Directors

Phil Damiano - Board President
Amy Miller-Dowell - Board Vice President
Simone Brooks - Board Secretary
Ayanna Curry - Board Treasurer
Tom Benjamin
Fred Hansen
Judith A. Pitre

Miscellaneous

PCRI Announcements

Welcome...

My name is **Rachel Hestmark**, and I joined PCRI as its new Administrative Assistant on October 1. In the past I worked in a personal injury protection/medical claims office and acquired a life and health insurance license. I enjoy working with the public, and look forward to the challenges



of working in the property management field of customer service. I am also a crafter and enjoy creating, designing and finding beauty in a lot of different things.

PCRI is pleased to introduce to you our newest maintenance employee, **Ernesto Romero**. Ernesto was born and raised in Havana, Cuba and lived there for 20 years before coming to the US in 1996. In Cuba Ernesto was in the military for two years and studied mechanical engineering in hopes to work on cruise liners.



In 1995 Ernesto tried to reach the US by raft but was picked up by the Coast Guard. He spent an uncomfortable year and a half in Guantanamo Bay before being allowed to come to the US as a political refugee. The Catholic Church helped him make his way to Portland, after another Cuban exile he met at Guantanamo wrote him about the less hectic life found in the Pacific Northwest. Ernesto took his friend's recommendation and has lived in Portland for seven years.

For the last six years Ernesto has worked in the maintenance field with Pinnacle Property Management and worked at Park Terrace Apartments. His friendly demeanor and desire to stay busy while doing a good job was apparent to all. PCRI is very happy to have him on the refurb crew and is confident he is an excellent contribution to PCRI.

Congratulations!

Charlie Chau was recently promoted to Fiscal Manager for PCRI. Congratulations!

Mary Lucero was recently elected to be Executive Secretary of the Community Development Network.

Goodbyes

Susan Barrett, Administrative Director, and Valerie Garrett, Project Manager, recently left PCRI. Together they dedicated nearly 10 years of service to advancing affordable housing in Portland. We wish them well and much success in their future endeavors!

PCRI neglected to include the departure of Shel Rama, Fiscal Manager, in the Summer newsletter. For two years Shel kept us focused on the bottom line and on our toes.

Now Hiring: Maintenance Technician

Your skills must include: painting, minor electrical and minor plumbing. This is a 90-day temporary position that may lead to permanent employment. The salary range is \$9-12/hour depending on experience. Send/fax resume to ATTN: Bryant.

PCRI Seeking Family-based Child Care Provider

PCRI has a beautiful home available for a family child care provider. This 1,810 sq. foot house has two bedrooms with 2 1/2 baths and comes equipped with a kid-sized bathroom, child care storage, equipment, furniture, quiet nap room, spacious playroom and fenced-in front and back yards. The house has a separate living space for the child care provider and her/his family. Rent is \$750 a month and includes garbage and water. Your household must be at or below 50% of County Median Income. If you are interested in living in this home and running your child care business in it, please contact Arika for an application.



News on the Homeownership Front

Interested in an **individual development account**? These accounts match your savings on a 3-to-1 basis, totaling up to \$8,000 for down payment and closing costs. This is a great way to see your dollar grow quickly.

A new home buying program called **Smart Commute** was announced in October. If potential home buyers choose a home within a quarter-mile of a bus stop, participating lenders will add a portion of their potential transportation savings to their qualifying loan. This can result in several thousand dollars in increased buying power.

Eleven PCRI households are currently enrolled in **PCRI's homeownership program**, which provides free home buying counseling and credit repair. If you are thinking about buying a house in the next three years, please come in or call our office to reserve a space.

HOST Development, a non-profit developer in Portland, has two- and three-bedroom **homes for sale starting at \$135,950** to first-time homebuyers. HOST even offers up to \$5,000 assistance towards closing costs to qualified buyers.

Homes at New Columbia will be for sale by summer 2005 and will include ones affordable to households making less than 60% of the Median Family Income. Market rate homes will range in price from \$130,000 to \$195,000.

For more information on any of these programs, please call Jorge at PCRI, (503) 288-2923.

