

# housing

## Year of "Green Growth" at B'nai B'rith Homecrest House Capped with Receipt of AAHSA "Enterprise Energy Audit"



The Resident Council at B'nai B'rith Homecrest House initiated resident recycling several years. In the past year, under the leadership of Board of Directors President Bruce Menditch, the residents, staff and Board of Homecrest House have a solid record of "Green Growth!" Capping the year, B'nai B'rith Homecrest House was one of 13 residences nationally to be selected by Enterprise Community Partners to receive a grant to fund a comprehensive, campus-wide energy saving audit.

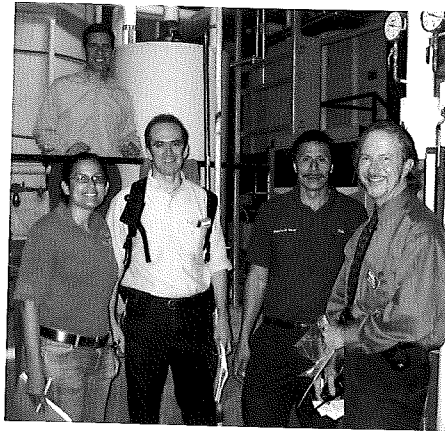
The early Resident Council commitment to, "Going Green" was wholeheartedly embraced by Bruce Menditch as he assumed the Presidency of the Homecrest House Board in July, 2008. As the owner of his own heating and air conditioning company, Menditch knew first hand the need for and the benefits of, "Going Green." One of Menditch's first initiatives was in October of 2008 to host, with his father, an all-resident meeting to show the film, "An Inconvenient Truth," and begin an ongoing recycling dialog.

Following the discussion, the residents and staff of Homecrest House formed the "Green Team." The goal of the "Green Team" was to increase in resident and staff awareness of the need to recycle and conserve energy and then, more challenging, to increase voluntary participation to do it!

Dova Boyers, Assistant Service



"9-11 Unity Walk" Volunteer Donny Phillips (left), outlines energy saving tips with B'nai B'rith Homecrest House resident Gloria Zorn while in the background, Abie Siegel (center) staff member at B'nai B'rith International, installs a new CFL light bulb in Zorn's living room lamp.



AAHSA Enterprise Energy Audit in Homecrest Boiler Room. Left to right in front: Amalia Cuadra and Jeffrey Perlman of Bright Power Inc.; Homecrest Maintenance Director Jose Riva, Homecrest Executive Director Joe Podson, in back: Matthe Hoffman of Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.

Coordinator at Homecrest House, worked with Joyce Hilliard-Franklin of the Montgomery County, Maryland Department of Public Works/Solid Waste Disposal, to secure for each resident of Homecrest House a personal, "Baby Blue" recycle bin. Homecrest House has 277 apartments in its three buildings. These bins were provided to Homecrest House at no charge by Montgomery County for use by residents. Montgomery County, Maryland is a leader nationally in its recycling efforts.

On receipt of the bins, the "Green Team" and staff hosted a recycling-bin distribution day for the "Baby Blues," distributing them with instructions on what should be recycled. Simultaneously, Homecrest House expanded resident recycling collection centers to each floor of the campus' three buildings. It was not long before residents exceeded Green Team expectations, and the Homecrest House maintenance staff was emptying the recycling collection centers several times per week!

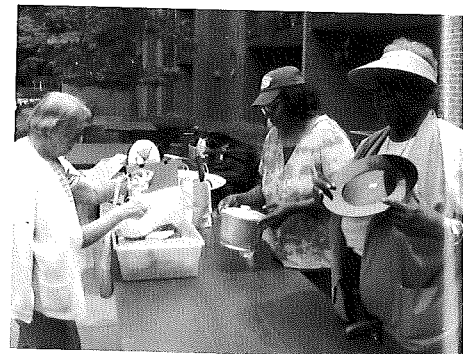
Concurrently, Homecrest House Marketing and Development Director Chuck Thornton was in touch with Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light (GWIFL.) GWIFL is a non-profit resource center for congregations and religious affiliated non-profit or-

ganizations in the greater Washington D.C. area to receive energy saving recommendations and energy saving CFL light bulbs.

Allison Fisher of GWIFL conducted an initial energy audit of Homecrest House in November of 2008. From her report, the GREEN TEAM and Homecrest House management created short and long-term goals.

Installing CFL energy-efficient light bulbs was an initial goal. At Homecrest House, residential apartment utilities are included as part of tenants' rent. The Green Team identified that energy costs would be significantly reduced if as well as the residence's carbon footprint if CFL light bulbs were used.

GWIFL underwrote providing each resident of Homecrest House who



The Resident Council recycled household items at its first "White Elephant" sale at Homecrest House.

chose to participate with three (3) CFL light bulbs at no cost. Over two weekends in early 2009, volunteers from GWIFL, B'nai B'rith International and Homecrest House joined with dozens of students and advisors from "9-11 Unity Walk" to distribute the CFL bulbs to residents, removed incandescent bulbs, and replaced them with new CFL bulbs. As a result, hundreds of new CFL light bulbs are being used by Homecrest residents. The Homecrest House on-site Convenience Store is also stocking CFL replacement light bulbs.

As the weather warmed, residents asked if they could have outside gardens to grow vegetables. This coincided with a request from the students of "9-11 Unity Walk" for another volunteer opportunity at Homecrest House. The



"9-11 Unity Walk" on Garden Day assisting residents in preparing and planting vegetable gardens.

result was "Garden Day" with "9-11 United Walk" and Homecrest House residents and volunteers putting in resident vegetable gardens. "9-11 Unity Walk" not only brought hands to help but gardening tools as well, and at the conclusion of the day donated the garden tools to Homecrest House!

In August, the Homecrest House Resident Council held its first ever, Resident Yard Sale. Resident Council President Rebecca Randall was overwhelmed by the positive response that allowed all manner of items to be recycled from one owner to another and, at the same time, benefit Resident Council

**Also this summer, The AAHSA Savings and Solutions Center (American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging) made available \$50,000 in Energy Audit Grants for AAHSA members from Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. of Washington, D.C.**

Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. was formed in 1982 by legendary urban visionary Jim Rouse and his wife Patty with the ambitious goal of making sure every American lives in a decent, affordable home. Today, Enterprise is a leading provider of capital and expertise for affordable housing and community development. Enterprise works with partners, developers, investors, government, community-based nonprofits and others such as AAHSA, to reach this common goal.

The Energy Audit grants are anticipated to help AAHSA members save \$22 million in energy costs. The energy audits would be performed by specialized engineers from Bright Power, Inc. who would identify capital improvements which could yield energy savings over the operating life of the of senior housing properties.

B'nai B'rith Homecrest House and

its Executive Director Joe Podson, both long time members of AAHSA, submitted an application. Podson was pleased to announce this fall that B'nai B'rith Homecrest House had been selected as one of thirteen (13) properties nationally to participate in the Energy Audit Grant program.

In September, Matthew Hoffman, Director of Innovation at Enterprise Community Partners in Washington, DC with Jeffrey Perlman and Amalia Cuadra of Bright Power Inc. of New York City, spent two full days with Homecrest Executive Director Joe Podson, and Homecrest House Maintenance Director Jose Rivas, examining in-depth all of the building and operational systems in all three buildings on the Homecrest House campus. The results of this comprehensive audit are currently being compiled.

When completed, Enterprise Community Partners will review the findings with Homecrest House management, recommend improvements and further, make recommendations on financing options that may be available to Homecrest House to support needed energy updates. The results of the Homecrest House energy audit are also be integrated into a session at the AAHSA Senior Housing Conference next month (November) in Chicago.

Now, on the first anniversary of Homecrest Board President Menditch's initial GREEN discussion, the GREEN TEAM held this month (October) a second all-resident Recycling Information Meeting to announce new, expanded opportunities for recycling in Montgomery County. Led by Paul

Golder, Program Specialist with the Montgomery County, Maryland Department of Environmental Protection/ Division of Solid Waste Services, Golder outlined how as much as 80% of what had been "trash" just a few years ago was as of this fall now able to be recycled in Montgomery County! He left the GREEN TEAM and residents inspired and energized, ready to come up with ways to implement this new phase of recycling opportunity at B'nai B'rith Homecrest House.

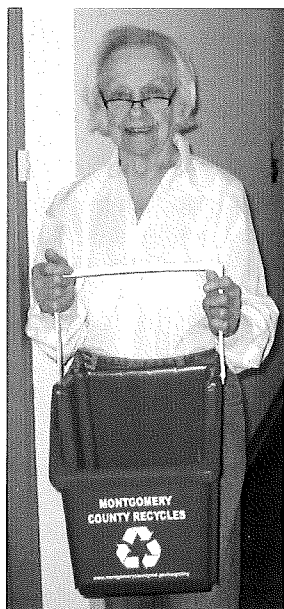
"For B'nai B'rith Homecrest House to be a good neighbor to our community and our planet is important," said Menditch, "Especially when doing good also allows us to conserve our financial resources so we can continue to provide affordable senior housing now and into the future."

B'nai B'rith Homecrest House is an interfaith senior residence located at 14508 Homecrest Road, Silver Spring, Maryland 20906. As a 501(c) 3 non-profit corporation, Homecrest House welcomes contributions and donations to allow it to continue providing vital, affordable senior living opportunities. Nestled amidst 10 acres of beautifully landscaped grounds with its own lake, the three buildings of Homecrest House provide 235 apartments for independent senior living and 42 apartments for congregate senior living with enhanced personal services. There are also a limited number of apartments for adults with physical mobility challenges. All B'nai B'rith Homecrest House apartments are eligible for subsidies to assist seniors with limited incomes. B'nai B'rith Homecrest House is currently accepting resident applications.

For more information on residential opportunities at Homecrest House or for details on how one can contribute to B'nai B'rith Homecrest House, contact Chuck Thornton, Director of Marketing and Development, at 301-598-4000, Extension 79.

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*Homecrest House does not discriminate on the basis of handicapped status in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its federally assisted programs and activities. EHO.*



Homecrest House resident Ida Turner receives her "Baby Blue" recycling bin. Montgomery County, Maryland's Office of Solid Waste Management donated the bins to Homecrest House for residents to use in their apartments to carry recyclables to collection points on each floor of each residence.