Survivors, Inc. Spring / Summer 2014

SURVIVAL NEWS

Volume 26, Number *1* *. . . the voices of low-income women*

DOTTIE STEVENS

OCTOBER 21, 1941—MARCH 27, 2014

IN MEMORIAM

THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO OUR BELOVED "DOTTIE"

FORMER MASSACHUSETTS GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE, MATTAPAN WOMAN OF THE YEAR, COMMUNITY ORGANIZER, CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST, EDITOR, HUMAN RIGHTS CITIES LEADER, BELOVED FRIEND AND MOTHER

Dottie Stevens has passed away at the Coolidge House Nursing Facility in Brookline, MA on Thursday, March 27, 2014, ending her long battle with cancer. She was a valiant defender and advocate for women and those less fortunate. She was a fierce fighter for justice and was unwavering in her struggle for human rights for all. In her last months and days, organizing from her hospital bed "office", she directed her projects of Survivors, Inc., *Survival News*, and Human Rights Cities, making and receiving calls, working on grants and budgets, and directing bedside meetings. Throughout her long illness, her friends and family formed a circle of care called "TEAM DOTTIE: Sharing the Caring" to advocate for her to make sure this fierce advocate for others had round-the-clock care and advocacy for herself.

She founded, with others, *Survival News* and Survivors, Inc. in 1987, as an outgrowth of the group, Advocacy for Resources for Modern Survival, (ARMS), the organization she started when she was a student and received her Master's Degree at the College of Public and Community Service of UMass/Boston. *Survival News* and Survivors, Inc. became the longest, continually published, original, women's anti-poverty journal, providing a voice by, for, and about the experience and effects of poverty on women and children in the U.S., for the past 27 years. Dottie and the journal and organization received many awards and honors during these years, culminating in having their historical records included in the Collection of the Sophia Smith Women's History Archives of Smith College, the oldest and largest women's history archive in the U.S. Her leadership, her expertise, her compassion, her wisdom, her staunch support, her local and nation-wide impassioned public speaking, her loyal friendship and inclusiveness inspired many to reach higher than they ever believed they could.

Survivors, Inc.
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Mattapan, MA 02126

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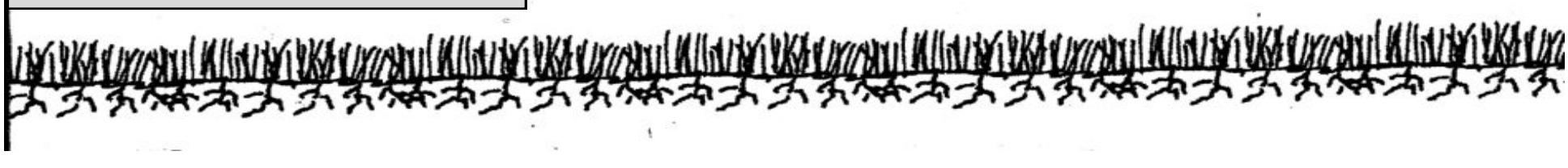
Dottie was sought out and spoke before countless diverse audiences, with an authority, dignity and respect that moved every audience, whether it was huge or small demonstrations before the Statehouse, testifying at hearings, in small classrooms, or at national conventions, her message of hope and calls to action were clear, authentic and effective. With Dottie's encouragement and belief in our abilities, we who worked with her were able to write, speak out, organize, educate and raise ourselves out of obscurity and poverty.

Her sweet spirit, her strong voice, her all-encompassing love, her tireless battle against poverty, and her amazing wisdom will be greatly missed by all who knew, loved, respected and admired her. May she rest in peace having left the world a better place than she found it by changing the lives and chances of literally hundreds of women and children specifically, and of all those she met who were fortunate enough to share the sphere of her enduring and living legacy.

She leaves her three sons, Joseph, Corey, and Steven; her sisters Patricia and Barbara; brothers, Robert and Paul, and many grandchildren. A joint memorial service for Dottie and her recently deceased daughter, Teresa, will be held on June 21, 2014 at Holy Redeemer Church of East Boston followed by their interment at Holy Cross Cemetery, in Malden, MA. This briefer Memorial Issue of Survival News, dedicated to Dottie's memory, contains all of the tributes that have been sent to us, along with many photos celebrating her brilliant life.∞

by Claire Cummings



SURVIVAL NEWS originated as a project of ARMS, (Advocacy Resources for Modern Survival), a welfare rights organization at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. It has been published by Survivors, Inc,, a non-profit Massachusetts corporation of low-income women and our allies building a movement for welfare rights and economic justice.

Survivors, Inc. Collective: Claire Cummings, Frances Darden, Diane Dujon, Debbie Ferretti, Terri Hinton, Jackie Dee King, Betty Reid Mandell, (ex officio), Mary Moore, Tram Nguyen, Island Paul, Lenore Pereira, TeePhee Pereira, Morrigan Phillips, Chaud Renaud, Meiko Rollins, Shakita Stafford, Laurie Taymor-Berry, Aislin Wallace.

Advisory Board: Mimi Abramovitz, Rachel Martin, Vicky Steinitz, Ann Withorn, Betty Reid Mandell.

Coordinator for Survivors, Inc.	Julie Joy
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Welfare Office Outreach	Islande Paul, Diana Moon
UMass/Boston Student Volunteer	Debbie Ferretti
Youth Advisory Committee:	Aislin Wallace, Julie Joy

Special Notice about Survivors, Inc.

As you have read on our front page and throughout this special Tribute issue, our founder, coordinator, and editor, Dottie Stevens, became gravely ill over the past year and passed away on March 27,2014. We rallied around Dottie to help with her health care, expenses, and family needs by forming a circle of friends and family called "TEAM DOTTIE: Sharing the Caring" to provide her with round the clock advocacy and care. We transferred many of Dottie's roles and duties to other Board members, former Board member volunteers, and some new people. This was a challenge, but some Board members have come through. Some former members became re-activated and some newer members took on more responsibilities. Still, it has not been possible to keep up with the administrative work that Dottie voluntarily completed. We are determined to represent the powerful voices of low-income women and their families through our continued community organizing and our coalition work. **But the charitable organization, Survivors, Inc. will be dissolved, effective June 30, 2014.** Many of us wish to and see the need for continuing to publish ***Survival News***, and there are some interested organizations that are considering becoming our new publisher. So there is hope that ***Survival News*** survives! Watch this space for the news!

SURVIVORS, INC.

OUR MISSION

We are a group of low-income women and their allies who organize and educate around poverty, welfare, and low-income survival issues. We offer training in writing, speaking, advocacy, computer skills, desktop publishing, organizing, membership and leadership. With these skills we are able to provide a forum for the voices of low-income women to be heard. We connect welfare office outreach and campus organizing with local and broader grassroots efforts to eliminate social and economic injustice.

Welfare Speakers Bureau

Survivors, Inc. has a busy Speakers Bureau on Welfare. We are eager to share our knowledge with your group. We generally speak in teams of at least two people, usually including a current or former welfare recipient who is a welfare activist. The other speakers come from a variety of backgrounds, including board members of Survivors, Inc., community activists, and committed academics.

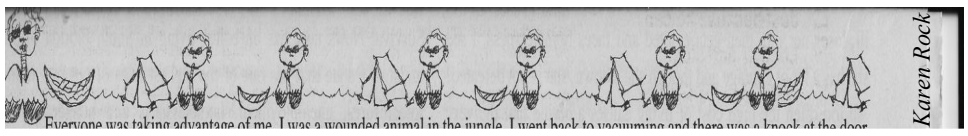
Fees are sliding scale and free to low income groups.

SURVIVAL NEWS pays $25 to low-income people for each article, poem, or original graphic or photograph that we print. The editorial board reserves the right to select material, and will give people help with writing upon request.

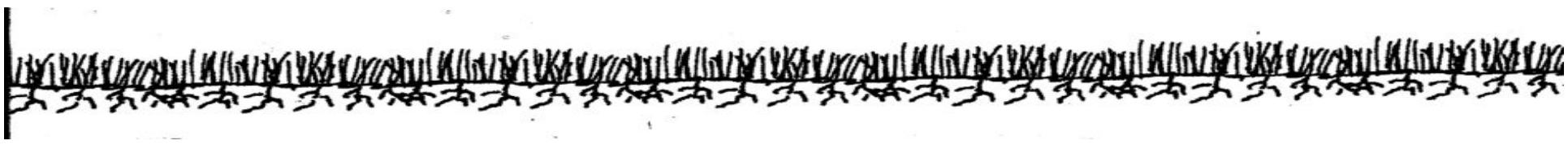
Our Supporters

Survivors, Inc. would like to thank the following foundations and contributors for their generous support of our work for humane welfare policy and economic justice for all: **Anonymous; Barbara Lee Foundation; Boston Women's Fund; Poor People's United Fund; Common Stream, Alice W. Door Foundation; Farnsworth House; Community Works; Resist; Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative; Twelfth Baptist Church and Haley House Café.**

We also thank all of the individuals who contribute to our efforts through gifts of money and time.



*Since you asked: The grassroots drawing running on the bottom of our pages were created as our logo by our Editor, Claire Cummings. If you look closely you can see that they represent people in our grassroots movements on the move, going forward!

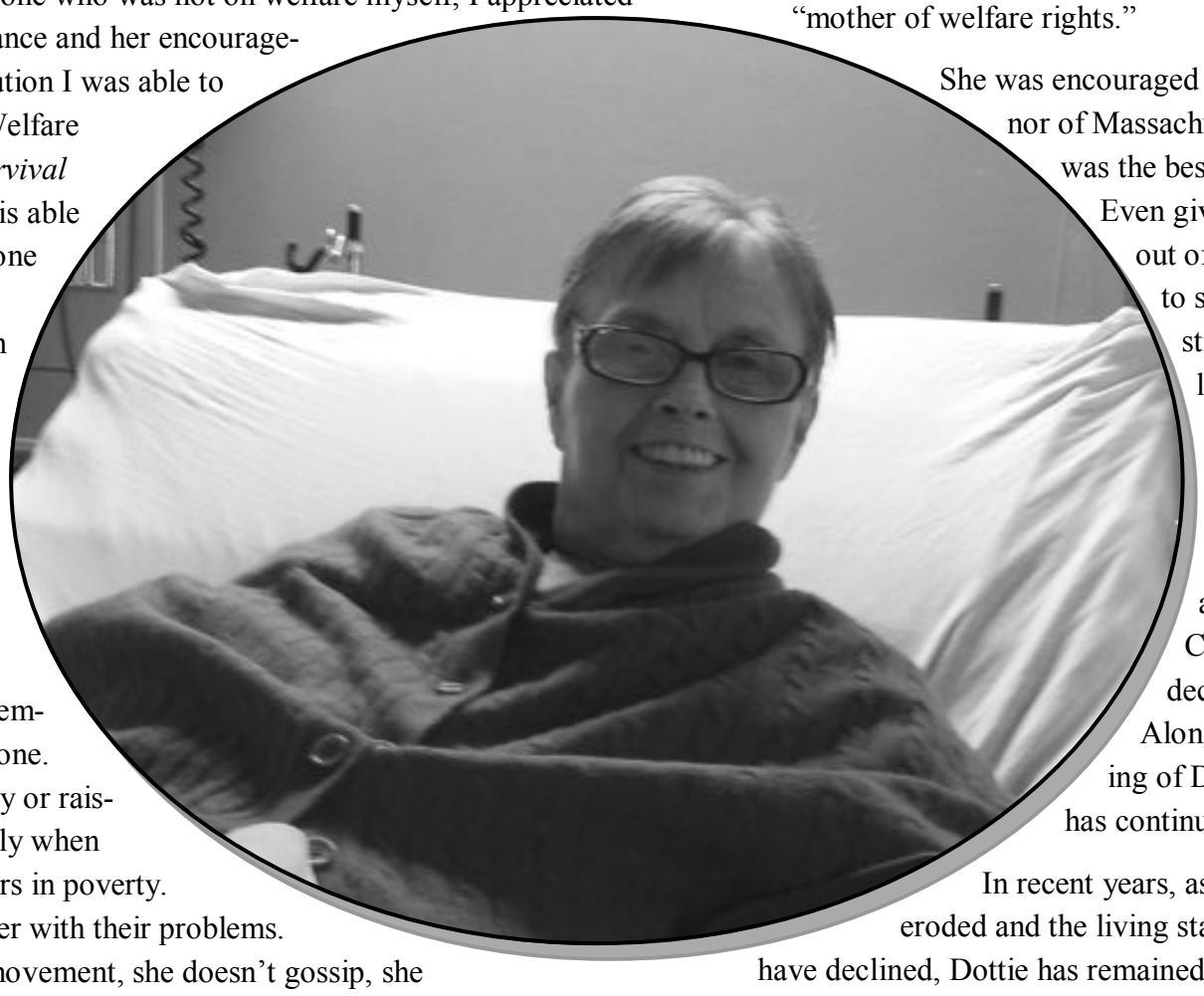


The Mother of Welfare Rights

by Jackie King

I first met Dottie Stevens when I was working as press secretary for the Mel King mayoral campaign in 1983. Dottie, Jeanne Dever and Diane Dujon were organizing a press conference publicizing their endorsement of Mel for Mayor, given his history of support for women struggling in poverty. They were all students at UMass Boston in the College of Public and Community Service. I remember how passionate they were about the cause and how strong in their support of Mel. That event was the first of many we would work on together.

I remember too, how warmly Dottie welcomed me into the welfare rights work. As someone who was not on welfare myself, I appreciated Dottie's open acceptance and her encouragement for any contribution I was able to make, as the Mass. Welfare Rights Union and *Survival News* got going. She is able to do that with everyone – reach out, pull people in, and bring forth their special talents.



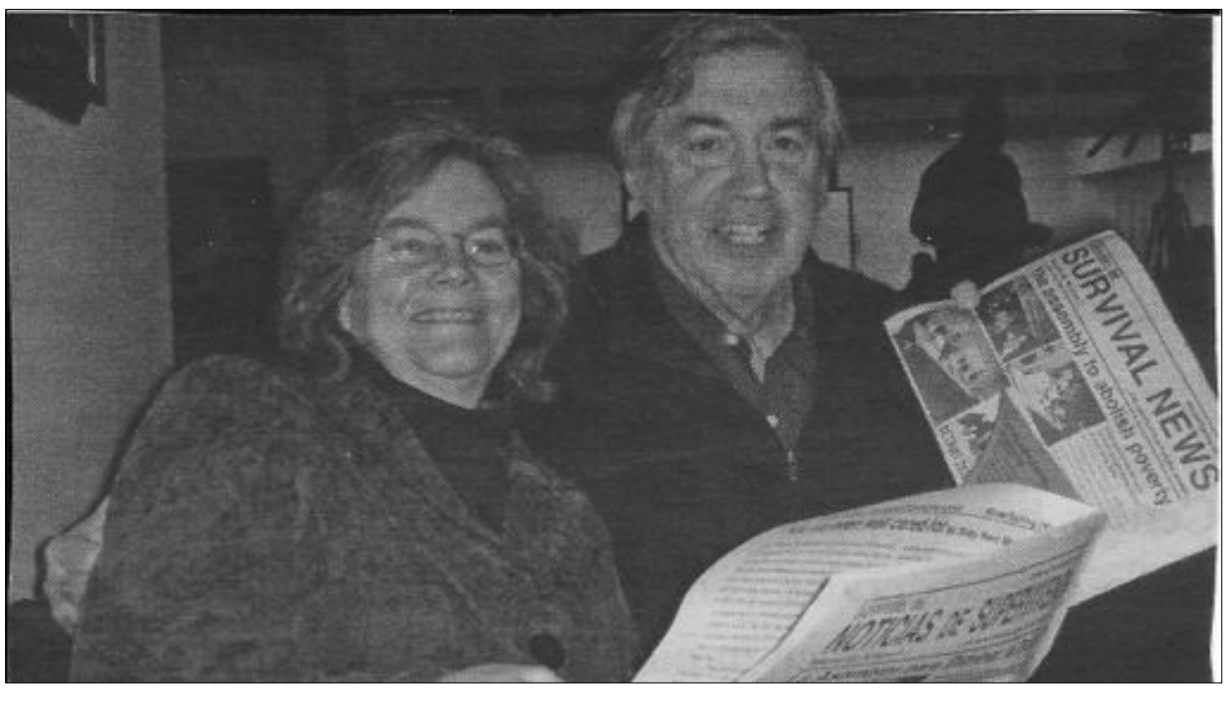
Dottie has rare qualities as a leader. On the one hand, she's a gentle self-effacing spirit with a light touch—patient, tolerant, finding redeeming qualities in everyone. She seldom gets angry or raises her voice, especially when dealing with her sisters in poverty. Everyone comes to her with their problems. Within the survival movement, she doesn't gossip, she dampens conflicts rather than fueling the flames, she makes each individual feel appreciated for her contribution.

On the other hand, she can be tough as nails when dealing with the powers-that-be in the Welfare Department, the Legislature, or the mainstream media. Anybody who has seen her swing into action, brandishing a bullhorn in front of the State House and yelling at the legislators for the latest cuts in welfare benefits, or at the *Boston Globe* for refusing to cover her gubernatorial campaign, knows what I mean.

Dottie has always had the ability to take in the big picture. While she works hard at the humble, day-to-day tasks of the movement, she always places what she is doing within the sweep of history, the deeper analysis of society, the national and international scope of change. She and Jeanne and Diane joined the National Welfare Rights Union (NWRU) at its inception in the mid-80s, at a national convention in Chicago. Dottie said, "There was a lot of conflict and people were splitting into different groups. We didn't know the people very well, so we went with the ones who said a prayer at the beginning. " That group formed the NWRU and Dottie went on to forge close, life-long friendships with national leaders Marian Kramer, Maureen Taylor, and others. She became the vice-president of the NWRU and many of her future campaigns were launched from that platform. She became known as the "mother of welfare rights."

She was encouraged by Marian to run for governor of Massachusetts in 1990 and she said it was the best decision she ever made. Even given the attempted news blackout of her campaign, she was able to speak to thousands about the struggles of women and families in poverty and "the right to thrive, not merely survive." Dottie helped launched the Economic Human Rights Campaign and led the effort, along with City Councilor Charles Yancey, to get Boston declared a Human Rights City. Along with the dedicated organizing of Debbie Ferretti and others, she has continued that work for years.

In recent years, as welfare rights have been eroded and the living standards of low-income people have declined, Dottie has remained at the helm of Survivors Inc., staunchly fighting the good fight. Even in her illness, she has continued to work and organize and coordinate activities from her bed. She has suffered great hardship and tragedy in her life, including the recent death of her beautiful daughter, but she has never given up. She is a shining spirit and an example to all of us. To my beloved comrade, sis-



Jackie and Jonathan King

From our archives: The Board at an Eliminating Racism Workshop

Thank you, Dottie

By Betty Reid Mandell

Dottie was one of the students in Ann Withorn's welfare class at UMass/Boston when I met her. Ann realized the potential for welfare rights organizing when she created this class composed entirely of welfare recipients. Members of the class formed a student organization called Advocacy for Resources for Modern Survival (ARMS). They obtained the use of a room where Ann's class met, and they met there to discuss strategy and tactics for improving welfare. At that time, welfare was called Aid to Families with Dependent Children and, although the grant was pitifully inadequate for raising a family, there was no time limit on receiving the grant. The goal of ARMS members was to raise the amount of the AFDC grant. A powerful national welfare rights movement had been formed in the wake of the Civil Rights movement in the late 60s and early 70s, and ARMS hoped to build on their momentum in Massachusetts.

At Ann Withorn's suggestion, I met with her class to find out how I could help them in their work. We decided that our first goal was to find a way to inform welfare recipients of their rights, since the welfare department often cheated people out of what they were legally entitled to and recipients didn't know their rights. We wrote and published a pamphlet called "You Can Apply" that explained the welfare grant and told people how to get the benefits they were entitled to. Nick Thorkleson, a cartoonist, agreed to illustrate it with cartoon, without charge. At that time the welfare department was more liberal than it has become since, and it agreed to distribute the pamphlet. As I recall, we gave them 1,000 copies to distribute. We were flushed with success, but crestfallen when we heard from an official at the welfare department that the pamphlets had been drowned in a water leak where they were stored. Although we suspected that they had made up this story to cover their real reluctance to distribute the pamphlets, we couldn't prove it. What to do now?

We decided that we would have to distribute the pamphlets ourselves to clients in the welfare offices and that was the beginning of our outreach program. However, welfare rules change frequently and the pamphlet was soon out of date. We decided that we needed a newspaper, and we began writing and publishing *Survival News*. The ARMS members also decided to form a non-profit tax exempt organization to carry on the welfare rights work, and formed Survivors, Inc. Jack Backman, a lawyer who had formerly been a Senator in the Massachusetts legislature, agreed to help us incorporate, without charging us. Dottie, who had been elected the president of Survivors, Inc., met with me and Jack Backman to draw up the papers of incorporation.

Most of the original ARMS members continued with Survivors, Inc., and other people joined. Claire Cummings and I took on most of the work of typing articles and laying out the paper with the desktop publishing program PageMaker. Claire is now single-handedly putting out this issue of the paper.

We got computers for many of the members of Survivors, Inc. Dottie was excited about owning a computer, and used it eagerly. We arranged some training at Curry College, where my husband taught and the director of the computer center agreed to conduct some training sessions with members of the group.∞

Lenore Periera, Diane Dujon, and Dottie receiving the Boston Women's Fund's 20th Anniversary Grantee Recognition Award in 2004.

Reprinted and slightly revised from the Boston Globe

When Dottie Kech-Stevens ran for governor in 1990 on an "elect the victims of poverty" platform, she faced at times what she called venomous personal attacks, not least of which were questions about why someone who had spent years as a mother on public assistance was not out looking-for work.

"I've had many jobs," she told the Globe, after an audience confronted her on a national television program. "But my first job, of being a mother, gets in the way. I think welfare is here to stay as long as you have spouses that batter, fathers that abandon their children, people who get sick, and women alone trying to raise their kids."

That last sentence concisely described two generations of her family. Her mother split from an abusive spouse to raise five children alone, sometimes on welfare. In turn, Ms. Kech-Stevens stepped away from three husbands in order to protect her four children, though it meant subsisting on public assistance. From childhood through motherhood, she knew poverty, which she tried to escape by marrying the first time at age 16.

"I guess I was looking for a way out," she told the Globe in 1990, "looking for Prince Charming"

Ms. Kech-Stevens, who became a resolute voice for the state's poorest families by helping to found and run antipoverty and economic justice organizations, died of cancer March 27 in Coolidge House, a care facility in Brookline. She was 72 and lived in Mattapan.

Her city neighborhood was far removed from the celebrity her candidacy brought: a feature in Time magazine and appearances on talk shows with Phil Donahue and Sally Jessy Raphael.

Ms. Kech-Stevens, who was considered such a fringe candidate she was not welcome at most debates, didn't receive enough votes at the Democratic convention to be placed on the ballot for the primary, which was won by John Silber. Republican William Weld won the general election.

When the spotlight faded, however, Ms. Kech-Stevens remained among those she served through her welfare rights endeavors.

Although she was young when she dropped out of school, she went on to earn a master's degree from the College of Public and Community Service at the University of Massachusetts Boston. While there, she was a founder of Advocacy for Resources for Modern Survival, which helps low-income s low-income students. She also was a founder of Survivors, Inc. and editor of its journal *Survival News*, a forum for the voices of low-income women. Neither venture provided enough income to lift Ms. Kech-Stevens out of the social class into which she was born,, but that was never her point.

"Here's a woman who had a master's degree and could have gone in any direction," said one of her sons, Joe Goodrich of Danvers. "She really could have capitalized on it if she was a greedier person, but she just cared too much about people. She chose to stay poverty-stricken to help those in that position. That speaks volumes about a person."

cared to much about people. She chose to stay poverty-stricken to help those in that position. That speaks volumes about a person." Jim Stewart, director of the First Church Shelter in Cambridge and a longtime advocate for poor and homeless people, said Ms. Kech-Stevens "had no interest at all at playing an insider game. She wanted to bear witness and speak the truth about something she knew a lot about: being a poor person and trying to survive in a society and an economy that seems to be growing less and less concerned about the needs of people like that."

Through her gubernatorial campaign and testifying at legislative hearings, through protest marches and guest lectures at places such as Harvard Law School, Ms. Kech-Stevens drought her advocacy to affluent audiences that, in many cases, had never seen poverty close up.

"She was extremely brilliant," said her longtime friend, Claire Cummings, a sociology professor emeritus at Newbury College. "She was a strategist of the highest order. She understood the public; she understood the system. She could talk about welfare and talk to every possible kind of audience, and she ended up changing their minds. I saw that happen over and over again. To me, that's incredible power, incredible talent."

Born Dorothy Zellen, Ms. Kech-Stevens grew up one of five children, "and we were on welfare," she recalled in "For Crying Out Loud: Women's Poverty in the United States," a 1996 book. "We were used to having no heat until Thanksgiving, and we never had hot water in the summertime," she wrote in her chapter, adding that she envied those in the projects across the street. "They *always* seemed to have heat and hot water all year round. Their electricity *never* got shut off. They received repairs if anything broke down and had their apartments painted every other year automatically. It seemed to me that living in the projects was a *luxury*!"

As her first marriage, then a second, then a third ended badly, "I fled from an abyss of cruelty, deceit, and oppression that I had never known existed," she wrote. "I had been a romantic fool, brainwashed by love."

Supporting four children on public assistance, she got a general equivalency diploma and went to UMass Boston, where a class in basic organizing demonstrated that her "live experienced was really a valuable asset."

With others she formed "a sisterhood, sort of a sorority of poor women" who helped each other navigate the public assistance bureaucracy. They also "compiled lists of wealthy suburban communities' trash pick-up days and organized furniture shopping sprees for the nights before trash collections. Individually, we were weak, but together we wereformidable."Another son, Corey Keck of Santa Cruz, Calif., said Ms Kech-Stevens "didn't allow herself to be knocked around by the system. They don't make it easy, and she learned a lot from that process."

Ms. Kech-Stevens "just had a hardscrabble life, and she dedicated her live to others who had the same, to try to help them, " Cummings said.

Tribute From Laurie Taymor-Berry

The first time I heard someone mention the name "Dottie Stevens", was in the halls of the Roxbury, N. Dorchester, South End Office of the Massachusetts Department of Social Services: "Did you hear about that welfare mother from Mattapan who is running for Governor?" I was intrigued as this was in the early fall of 1989 during the time when the "Massachusetts Miracle" turned into the "Massachusetts Nightmare". Austerity had set in to state government and I foundmy position number eleven on a statewide seniority list…ten had already been laid off.

I met Dottie in the spring of 1990, on the barricades in Harvard Square, protesting with the Citizens For Limited Taxation. The march and rally were spearheaded by the Cambridge Summit of Concern which I had immersed myself in as an organizer with the Tax Equity Alliance (T.EA.M). My husband also met Dottie at this time and became her videographer and the documentarian of her quest to become Governor of Massachusetts.

After the 1990 Gubernatorial Election was over, Dottie, along with Kip Tiernan. organized the Shadow Government with Dottie as the Governor. In 1991, my position, in state government, was eliminated and I began working with Dottie and the Mass Welfare Rights Union to combat the draconian cuts to welfare grants and social services in Massachusetts mandated by the newly elected Governor, William Weld. Working with Dottie, the Mass Welfare Rights Union and "Survival News," was a continuation of the work I had engaged in as a civil rights worker in 1971 with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

Laurie Taymor-Berry with future Mayor Mike Walsh at Congo Minerals Meeting.

My first trip with Dottie was to Washington D.C. as a contingent of the Mass Welfare Rights Union.We met up with Marion Kramer, President of the National Welfare Rights Union from Detroit to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of Rev. Martin Luther King's March on Washington.

I cannot begin to count the many marches, rallies, forums and vigils that we worked on together. I have been honored to serve with Dottie as the Vice-President of the Mass Welfare Rights for more than a decade. Knowing Dottie has been a gift.

For almost twenty-five years, Dottie has been one of my closest and dearest friends. We spoke, on the phone, several times a week, until she went into the hospital a little over nine months ago. We spoke, not just about the work we shared, but about our hopes, fears and dreams, as well as personal sadness and joys.

She was a very special person who could nurture so many women (and some men) from the broad spectrum of diversity: young and old, black, white, yellow, brown, gay, straight, rich or poor. She could relate to everyone and feared no one. Dottie inspired loyalty and the love to carry out "the work". ∞

Congo Conflict Update: For the past year, Congo Action Now has intensified our work to support the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo in ending the war and sexual violence that are devastating the eastern region of the country. This fighting – a conflict that has gone on for seventeen years and has resulted in six million deaths and many thousands of rapes - is occurring in large part over the region's vast mineral wealth. The illegal trade in minerals (especially those required for cell phones and laptop computers) is financing and perpetuating the war and sexual violence.

CAN is continuing our work to get a Congo Conflict Minerals bill passed by the Massachusetts legislature. The bill moved steadily through the last legislative session. In April, a powerful public hearing was held before the Joint Committee on State Regulation and Regulatory Oversight and the committee quickly issued a favorable report. The bill was in the House Ways and Means Committee before the legislative session ended on July 31. Now the new session has begun and Representative Walsh of Dorchester just re-filed this bill that will prohibit the Commonwealth from contracting with companies that do not comply with federal Congo Conflict Minerals tracking requirements.

It's an exciting time – because of the groundwork we laid last session, there is a great deal of enthusiasm for the bill and a number of legislators are eager to see the Commonwealth take this action to support the people of Congo. Now is the time to sign on co-sponsors for this critical legislation. Before the February 1 deadline, please contact your state senator and representative. Ask them to sign on as co-sponsors of *An Act Relative to Congo Conflict Minerals* that has been filed by Representative Walsh. You will find contact information at http://www.malegislature.gov/People/Search.

Together we can make a difference in the lives of the women, children, and men of the Democratic Republic of Congo. If you would like to join Congo Action Now in our legislative or educational work, please contact us at www.congoactionnow@yahoo.com. We would love to hear from you!Pat Aron

Public Health Social Worker

Chair, Congo Action Now

Boston WILPF (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom)

(Continued from Page 5)

"There were times when she would put her fight for welfare mothers before her family," Joe said of his mother. "But in the long term, it was also for her family, because it benefited everyone. She never thought of herself first. It was always for the greater good. I can't put her in sainthood, but she comes close at times."

While visiting last year for what turned out to be Ms. Kech-Stevens final Mother's Day, Corey "had the opportunity to finally say to her how proud I was of her," he said. "I had the chance to say all the things you want to say to your Mom if you're a son, and I did that."

In addition to her two sons, Ms. Kech-Stevens leaves another son, Steven Stevens of Mattapan; two sisters, Patricia Kelly of Carlsbad, Calif., and Barbar Sutton of Romona, Calif.; two brothers, Robert Zellen of Modesto, Calif, and Paul Zellen of Massachusetts; six grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

A funeral mass for Ms. Kech-Stevenss and her daughter Teresa Kech, who died earlier this year, will be said at 9:00 A.M. June 21 in Most Holy Redeemer Church in East Boston.

A potluck reception after the burial, in honor of Ms. Kech-Stevens talents cobbling together meals and nearly everything else from what was easily available and inexpensive, will be held at the Savin Hill Yacht Club from 2-6PM.

"She was fun. We had fun. We laughed; we joked, " Cummings said. "As poor as she was, she never had money, but, my God, she gave me all these presents. She loved to go to secondhand shops, and she scoured those places."

According to her "BFF" Cummings, "Dottie, herself, was the best present of all."∞

Tribute From Diane Dujon, Co– Founder of A.R.M.S and Survivor's Inc

Dottie and I met in the early 1980's at the College of Public and Community Services (CPCS) at UMass/ Boston. We took a class, Organizing for Basic Human Needs, that was taught by Ann Withorn. We were both outraged at the public's negative perceptions of welfare recipients. We joined the Coalition for Basic Human Needs, which was based in Cambridge, and created a UMass student center, Advocacy for Modern Survival (ARMS, meaning loving arms, not weapons!) We began writing and speaking publicly in an effort to both support other mothers in poverty and to correct the public's perception. Welfare recipients were depicted as lazy and mostly Black. Since welfare recipients were raising children alone on an extremely inadequate budget, they had to do everything themselves. We began being interviewed on the radio and television. We produced a booklet for welfare recipients, "You Can Apply", which we took to welfare offices to let recipients know their rights and all of the services for which they were eligible. We produced a radio documentary, "Workfare: Anatomy of a Policy,"which won theAlice Award (a national media award!)

We also joined the National Welfare Rights Union, which was based in Detroit.

Before long, the services and eligibility criteria began changing at an increasingly rapid rate that required us to switch to a newspaper. Survival News was initiated and we encouraged people to write articles about their experiences of living in poverty. The newspaper was distributed nation-wide.

Dottie and I were inseparable, studying and working on poverty issues. We both got undergraduate degrees and continued on to earn our graduate degrees. When we got our Master's degrees, Dottie called us "sisters in the hood!" In 1996, as part of my graduate studies, Ann Withorn and I edited a book, *For Crying Out Loud: Women's Poverty in the United States*. Dottie contributed a chapter, "Welfare Organizing Saved My Life".

I began teaching classes at CPCS and used the book and *Survival News* as reading materials for my students. Dottie was often a guest speaker in my class.

For more than 30 years, Dottie and I have worked tirelessly to eliminate poverty in this extremely wealthy country.

Open Media Boston

metro news from the ground up

Dottie Stevens, Presente

OMB Editorial

by Jason Pramas (Staff)

The anti-poverty movement lost one of its great warriors last week when Dottie Stevens of Mattapan passed away after a tough fight with cancer. So I thought I'd say a few words in her memory.

I had the honor of working with Dottie in the late 1990s and early 2000s during the desperate struggle to stop the Commonwealth of Massachusetts from joining the Clinton administration in destroying the remnant of the welfare system for impoverished women and their children. We lost. Through the labor-community coalition Working Massachusetts, we kept up the struggle for years after the destruction of the bedrock of the American social safety net was a done deal. But we lost all the same.

People always learn something from such defeats, and here's what I learned: if I wasn't crystal clear on the rapacious nature of capitalism before the loss, I was afterwards. I saw a multiracial movement of working class women and children try with all their might to create enough political pressure to prevail over the powerful forces arrayed against them, and I saw them laid low. By Democrats that talk left and break right, and by part of the very non-profit sector that had been created decades previous to help people in need. I cannot and will not sugar coat those facts.

Furthermore, I saw that movement champions like Dottie break through the ruling class dominated discourse on state and federal policy for only very brief periods in history, and they generally win a little or lose a lot before getting shoved away from the precincts of the good and the great - figuratively and sometimes physically. In rough arrests during political actions. And in the thousand cuts delivered by a heartless bureaucracy deployed by politicians working in the service of corporations against the interests of their constituency ... to rob from the poor and give to the rich.

Not that such treatment ever deterred Dottie. She never gave up. And that's why I respected her. A working class hero is something to be, as the old song goes. And Dottie Stevens was such a one.

My best to her friends and family.

Frederick Douglass Peace Garden, Boston, MA

My Tribute to Dottie:

I met Dottie in 2008 at her home in Mattapan in search of an article published in Survival News about the shackling of pregnant inmates during labor. I was given Dottie's contact info from Mary Jo Hetzel, Ph.D, a former professor of mine at Springfield College-Boston campus, where I originally saw the article and became horrified at the image of a woman sweating and struggling to deliver her baby while shackled to a hospital bed.

So, that image led me to Dottie. When I first met Dottie and sat and sipped Dunkin' Donuts coffee in her living room I immediately felt at home and it felt like I knew Dottie all my life. Dottie resembled my great-uncle's wife Esther, a woman who doted on me during my first few years of life and considered me a "gift and a blessing from God" because I was born not only on her birthday but around the time when she lost my uncle to cancer. So Dottie reminded me of my Aunt Esther and thus my meeting her conjured up warm memories.

My meeting Dottie and working with Dottie gave me an opportunity to work with other fascinatingly fierce women as well. These women were and are "true grit". When I was a part of Survivors, Inc. and when I made contributions to Survival News I felt like I was part if something much bigger than myself. Dottie was the gateway for me believing in my ability to not only being able to write but also believing that I could make "change". That I could create "change". And that it is never easy, but in the end the struggle is never something to regret, or to be forgotten, and that it is worth every ounce of pain. ∞

By Chaun Janelle Renaud

Dottie with the Board in happy times!

Tribute to Dottie

By Dr. Mary Bricker-Jenkins, Professor Emeritus

Temple University School of Social Work

Over the years, my students and I read thousands of publications—mostly scholarly journals and books—but Dottie's labor of love, *Survival News*, was always among the most helpful to those who wanted to learn how to be really good social workers. It always conveyed not only facts, insights, and wisdoms, but also inspired respect and dignity for those who work tirelessly for an end to poverty—*just as Dottie herself has always done*. Thank you, Dottie, for teaching us how to walk the justice walk.

"I just love this paper!!"

Dottie and Claire at the Opening Reception of their Photo Exhibit "The Art of Survival: Documenting the Movement" A Retrospective of Dottie Stevens Photographs 1984—2004. One of Dottie and Claire's proudest accomplishments.

Photo by Julie Joy

Guests enjoying the Exhibit and Opening Night Reception at Newbury College Library Gallery

Dottie's Mural, seen here before it was framed, another of her proudest accomplishments, was a part of the Photo Exhibit and has traveled around the Country.

Photos by Claire Cummings

Tribute From Roxanne Reddington-Wilde

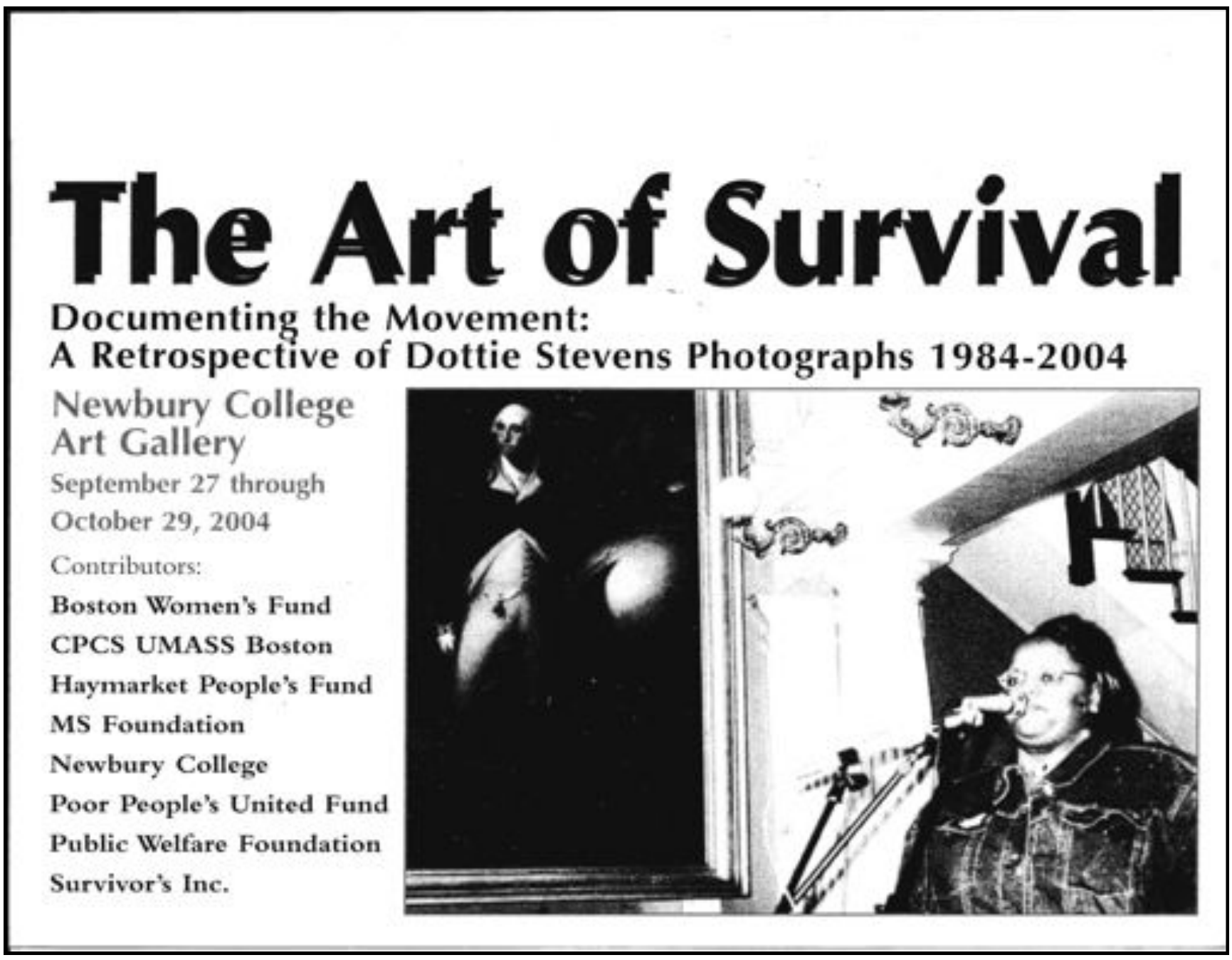
Dottie with Mel King shouting out for justice at Frederick Douglass Peace Park

I don't remember activism without Dottie. I fell into a job at Action for Boston Community Development the week Clinton signed welfare reform -- welfare "deform," Dottie put it -- hired to coordinate a joint community/ provider/academic conference we all decided to call "What's Going on? The Impacts of Welfare Reform on Boston." Dottie and Survivor's Inc. taught me to always put the perspectives of poor people first.

Dottie was everywhere in activism, including at the State House. For years I had a black & white postcard on my old, ABCD office wall announcing the exhibit of her photographs of poor people that she and Claire Cummings created called: "The Art of Survival: Documenting the Movement—A Twenty Year Retrospective of Dottie Stevens Photographs 1984—2004". When I had to move from that office, I threw out seven overflowing trash barrels of papers, folders, notebooks.... I kept the postcard. And when I go from a cubicle to another, permanent office at ABCD, up it goes again.

Dottie hauled me in to UMass Boston's ARMS Center talks, Human Rights City Boston meetings, into Frederick Douglass Peace Park protests....I took a picture of her, last April at the Peace Park. She had a huge grin on her face all afternoon as we read aloud the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. She asked me to read Article 25, that "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being... to security." But in the picture I took, Dottie's not grinning. No, she is calling out in a loud voice --encouraging, urging... demanding we take action for all.

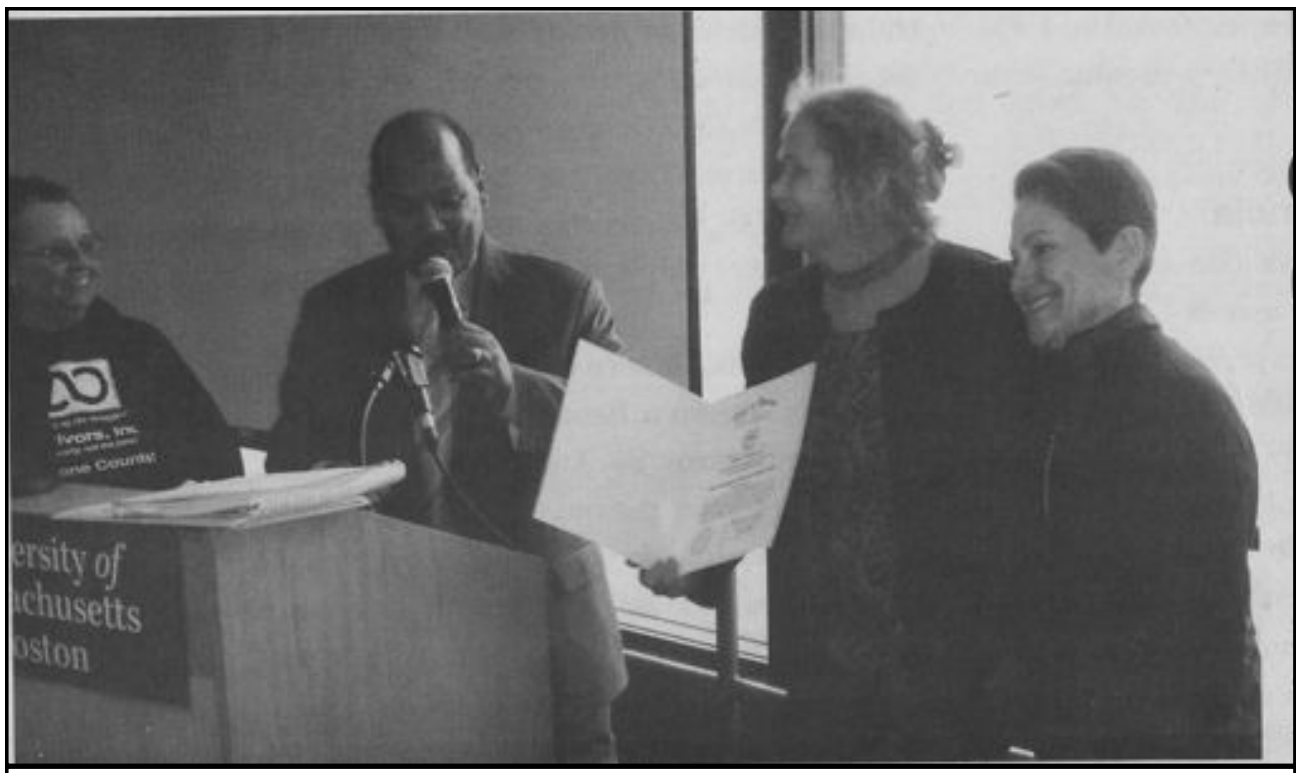
And as I go forward, continuing to take action demanding the rights of poor people be respected, Dottie's teachings, Dottie's face...Dottie's voice shall go with me.∞



Tribute From Debbie Ferretti

I first meet Dottie Kech Stevens while volunteering at tbe A.R.M.S Center.

It was a cold January day. I looked up and Dottie had come to speak to us about a dream of Boston becoming a Human Rights City. As she walked in waves came from all directions. Not very tall in stature but she filled a room with her presence. We sat for about one hour talking about the conference she attended. Dottie's passion could be felt in every conversation anyone had with her.



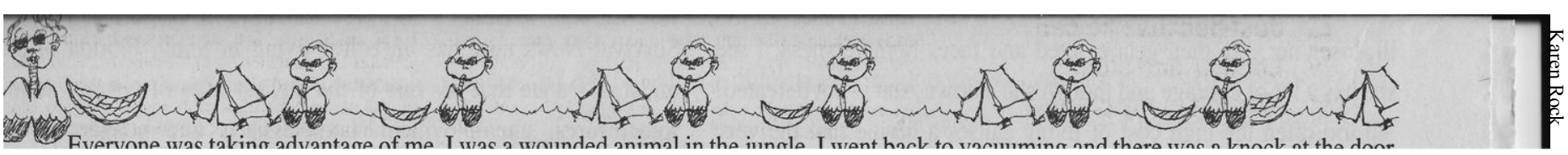
Dottie, Councilman Charles Yancey, Debbie Ferretti, and Professor Sylvia Magnom accepting the Proclamation of Boston as a Human Rights City.

Photo by Julie Joy

Dottie's mission, while she could, was to make the best life possible for herself, family as well as her friends. Dottie never spoke of her accomplishments we always spoke of what was needed to be done to accomplish her latest cause. I am always in awe of how from that first day to even now whenever people had a problem Dottie knew who to speak to and what necessary steps to accomplish what they wanted in resolving any issue.

Working along side Dottie Stevens I had the privilege to get to know her personally. With this knowledge came a great admiration and respect, because of her beliefs. These beliefs may have started with Women's Rights but continued to her latest project Human Rights City Boston & Beyond. Dottie Kech Stevens had the insight to know the biggest help she could be for someone who had been violated is to validate them. Dottie's passion for life is what gave her the drive and vision that kept her going long after everyone else had thought it was useless to continue. There was not any better feeling for her to prove those individuals wrong and to show that each individual is a human being with the same needs and wants.

The statement that sticks out the most for me is "People give what they can" "People only have a little now, but it shows that he/she care and that is a start" Dottie's seed has been planted. Dottie and I worked tirelessly with the Human Rights City Boston and Beyond with long lengthy discussions. When it came time to decide symbol or idea for Human Rights City I think is a perfect picture describing Dottie's contribution. ∞



Good Bye Karen Rock

We Lost a Valiant Welfare Warrior, A Loyal Friend, A Powerful Activist and A Brilliant Artist

Karen Rock lost her battle with cancer this year. With her death Survivors, Inc. and *Survival News* has lost our own, original artist, author and cartoonist. She has been drawing cartoons for Survival News since our earliest issues encompassing our entire history of twenty seven years. She has written many articles, which were always written in her inimitable humorous style. She was an ardent activist, speaker and organizer in the Springfield, MA area. She was a great woman and mother and grandmother. She will be sorely missed. Enjoy a couple of her great drawings.

SURVIVAL TIPS

Greater Boston Legal Services can help you get benefits

If you are having trouble getting the benefits to which you are entitled, contact Greater Boston Legal Services at (617) 371-1234. They can give you advice or representation to deal with the Department of Transitional Assistance (welfare) or a Housing Authority. They may help you directly, or refer you to another legal service. Their Housing Unit does not generally take public/subsidized cases until the eviction stage, except for some urgent cases such as homeless families. GBLS provides either a bilingual advocate or uses interpreters to communicate with non-English-speaking clients. If you don't live in the Boston area, they can refer you to legal services in your area.

You can also get legal advice on line at **MassLegalHelp,** www.masslegalhelp.org.

Survival Tips Author, Survival News Founder and First Editor, Betty Reid Mandell, (2nd from upper left), at a typical dining room table editorial board meeting at Claire Cummings home.

Food Programs

Project Bread can give you information about food stamps, and can tell you what food pantries and food kitchens are near you, and tell you food stamp outreach locations. They have translators in several languages. Call their **FoodSource** Hotline, 1-800-645-8333; TTY: 1-800-377-1292. Their hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.; Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Their web site is project-bread.org

Food Stamps (SNAP)

Everyone has the right to apply for Food Stamps (now called SNAP, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) at their local DTA office, on the Internet, by mailing in an application, or at other food stamp outreach locations. Call the DTA at 1-800-249-2007 for more information about food stamps or visit webapps.ehs.state.ma.us/DTAOffices/ to find your local DTA office. You can also call **Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline** at 1-800-645-8333 for help finding food resources in your area. You have the right to sign a paper application the same day you go into a DTA local office or sign an online application electronically.

You can also apply online by going http://www.mass.gov/snap and clicking on the link for the SNAP application. Then, click on "Apply" for the on-line application, or you can print out a paper application off the DTA website. If you do not want to apply on-line or do not have access to the Internet, you can ask DTA (at the number above) to mail you a copy and you can mail or fax it back after you fill it out.

You can get expedited (fast) food stamps if you have little or no income and assets, or if your shelter costs are higher than your income and money in the bank. This means that you should receive the benefits on an EBT card within 7 days of when DTA receives a signed application and screens you for expedited benefits. It is sometimes best to go in person if you need food stamps fast. DTA will ask for proof of who you are (your identity) and will ask you about your income, money in the bank, and expenses, to see if you qualify. You do not need a photo ID or birth certificate. If you do not have any proof of identity but you know your SSN, DTA can check your identity through your SSN and date of birth.

If you are not eligible for expedited food stamps, you can still get food stamps within 30 days of when you apply, if you meet the eligibility rules. You will need to be interviewed—either over the phone or in person— and provide proofs of your income, your address, and your immigration status (if you are not a U.S. citizen). You can self-attest to your shelter costs and childcare expenses by writing them on the paper application or giving your worker a signed sworn statement. You can provide proof of your address in many ways, such as with a bill, your lease, an I.D., or government letter. You should receive a letter in the mail after you apply that tells you when your interview is scheduled. After your interview, you will also get a letter about the proofs you will need to send to your worker. Unless you need expedited food stamps, DTA does not count assets in deciding if you are eligible for benefits.

Be sure to tell DTA if you pay for childcare or before/after school fees, or if you pay for the care of a disabled adult so that you can work or go to school yourself. You can also claim the costs of travel (public transportation or a car) to and from childcare, after school programs, etc., at the federal mileage rate of 56.5 cents per mile. You can provide a sworn statement about your childcare costs. Claiming childcare expenses can increase your food stamps.

If anyone in your household is severely disabled or age 60 or older, they can also claim the cost of any out-of-pocket medical expenses to increase food stamps. Medical expenses that can be claimed include transportation to doctor appointments and pharmacies to pick up medication (at 56.5 cents per mile). It also includes Medicaid co-payments, Medicare premiums, over-the-counter health care supplies such as aspirin, hearing aid batteries, eye glasses, skin ointments, incontinence supplies, or any other medical supplies recommended by a health provider. It can also include alternative therapy costs not covered by MassHealth or Medicare (chiropractic, acupuncture, massage therapy, herbal remedies). You can also claim and prove the cost for service animals. You will need to provide proofs of your medical expenses, and a list of medical facilities you visit to claim transportation. If an elder (60+) or disabled household member has more than $35/month in medical related expenses, you will get a deduction on your income, which means you could increase your food stamp benefits. **Claiming medical expenses can** increase your food stamp benefits.

College students may also qualify for food stamps if they are low-income and meet any of the following: a) the student gets any amount of federal or state work study, b) works an average of 20 hours a week, c) has children under age 12 or gets TAFDC, d) is disabled, e) is over age 49 or under 18, f) is enrolled in school through an Employment and Training Program or the Division of Unemployment. In addition, any students enrolled in community college programs may also qualify for food stamps if they are enrolled in a career or technical education major or certificate program, or if the college thinks their course of study will lead to employment. DTA has a form for community colleges to sign to verify the course of study of these students. Students or other young adults under age 22 who live at home with parents must be part of the parent's SNAP benefits.

If you are denied food stamps or disagree with the amount of your benefits, you have the right to question and challenge any decisions made by DTA that you disagree with. There is information on-line about food stamps and about how to appeal a denial of benefits:www.masslegalhelp.org. You can also contact the Legal Services office in your area for advice and legal representation.

3 Things You Need To Know About Photo EBT Cards

Massachusetts state law now requires that certain EBT cardholders be issued Photo EBT Cards with their picture. If you receive SNAP or cash benefits, you may get a letter from DTA about the new photo EBT card:

1. About half of SNAP households will have a photo EBT card.

Under state law, households will get a photo-less EBT card when the head of household is:

- Age 60 or older,
- Disabled or blind,
- Under age 19,
- A victim of domestic violence, or
- You have a sincere religious objection to a photo.

If DTA tells you that you need a photo EBT card, but you meet one of the above categories, call your DTA worker. You should be exempt from having a photo on your EBT card, unless you want one.

2. Every SNAP household member has the right to use the EBT card.

Stores cannot refuse to accept the EBT card from household members, such as spouses or older children. This is true even if their name or photo is not on the card. In addition, caregivers you authorize can also use your EBT card to food shop for you.

Just like a debit card, your PIN is what keeps your benefits safe and is your electronic signature. If the proper PIN is used, the shopper should be able to use the card.

3. Stores cannot treat SNAP recipients differently from other shoppers.

A store clerk cannot ask to see your EBT photo card unless they routinely ask everyone using credit or debit cards to show a photo ID. Also, stores that accept EBT cards cannot set up "SNAP-only" checkout lines or discriminate against SNAP households.

Federal rules protect the right of all authorized members to use the EBT card and to not be discriminated against.

For more information, contact Vicky Negus, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, 617-357- 0700 x 315

If a household member is not allowed to use the EBT card, or if you are being hassled or treated different from other shoppers, call your local Legal Services office. Go to www.masslegalhelp.org for more information.

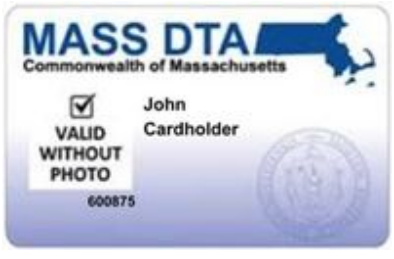
There are THREE types of Massachusetts EBT Cards now in circulation:

Since December 1, 2013 there are THREE (3) different EBT Cards in circulation in the MA. The good news for retailers and EBT customers is that all three cards operate the same, and the same federal EBT rules apply!

Card A: Photo EBT Card

This card was issued to 170K SNAP households at the end of November 2013, effective for the December SNAP (food stamps) or cash issuance. Households that *received* this card had their blue Bay State Access card *deactivated*.

Card B: Valid-Without-Photo EBT Card



This card will primarily be issued to *new applicants* for SNAP or cash who are exempt from the photo EBT rule. Some additional MA households may receive this in 2014. Most DTA households still have the blue Bay State Access card below.

Card C: Regular Blue EBT Card

This blue card is *STILL in effect for most DTA households*. The blue card was deactivated ONLY for households issued the new Photo EBT Card by mail, or who visit DTA to get a photo or valid-without-photo EBT card. If the Bay State Access blue card is not deactivated, it must be accepted by stores.

Fair Foods

Fair Foods transports daily truckloads of grocery-quality fresh surplus food from industry to low-income communities in Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire. Bring your own bags for the food, which includes fruits and vegetables, to their Two-Dollar-A-Bag site. They do not require identification or income verification. They provide food to anyone who needs it, because there is more than enough to go around. Beyond keeping people from going hungry, Fair Foods provides the building blocks of a healthy life: fresh, affordable fruits and vegetables fifty-two weeks per year. Their headquarters in Boston are in Dorchester, telephone 617-288-6185. Their web site is www.fairfoods.org, which lists sites in the Boston area. In addition to the sites listed on their web site, there is a site

called **A-MARKET** at 111 Seaver Street and Blue Hill Avenue in Roxbury. They are open every Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Fair Shoes is a program to educate diabetics on the importance of healthy eating and activity, that helps diabetics on Medicare who qualify to get a free pair of therapeutic shoes and three pairs of custom-made insoles every year. The program is sponsored by Fair Foods, 617-288-6185.

Community Servings is a not-for-profit food and nutrition program providing services throughout Massachusetts to individuals and families living with critical and chronic illnesses. They give their clients, their dependent families, and caregivers appealing, nutritious meals, and send the message to those in greatest need that someone cares. Their goals are to help their clients maintain their health and dignity and preserve the integrity of their families through free, culturally appropriate, home-delivered meals, nutrition education, and other community programs. Call 617-522-7777; fax: 617-522-7770. Their web site is www.servings.org

Fuel Assistance for the winter months

Low-Income people can get help in paying for fuel. In Boston, Brookline and Newton, **ABCD** administers the federal fuel assistance program. Phone 617-357-6012, ext. 11. Assistance is for any form of heat — oil, gas, electric, wood, or kerosene. Help is given to those whose heat is included in the rent in non-subsidized housing. People with housing subsidies can get help if they pay for heat. Sign-up period is November 1 to April 30. Eligibility level is 60 percent of the medium income in Massachusetts— $32,065 for a family of 1; $41,932 for 2; $51,798 for 3; $61,664 for 4. For more details, see http://www.bostonabcd.org/fuel-assistance-liheap.aspx

Other benefits for people eligible for fuel assistance are weatherization (insulating your house against the cold), electrical audits, heating system repair/replacement. Low-income households applying for Fuel Assistance may also qualify for a Free Energy Audit via the associated, Weatherization program, without having to apply separately.

If you live outside of Boston, Brookline, and Newton, call the Department of Housing and Community Development Heat Line at 1-800-632-8175 and enter your zip code to find out the agency near you.

The Good Neighbor Energy Fund has provided energy assistance to hundreds-of-thousands of residents in temporary crisis who are struggling to pay their energy bills. It is available to any Massachusetts resident who, because of temporary financial difficulty, cannot meet a month's energy expense and is not eligible for state or federal fuel assistance. It is a cooperative effort between the participating energy companies in Massachusetts, **The Salvation Army,** which administers the Fund, and residents of the Commonwealth. This year's Fund disbursement is $250 per eligible household per year.

To quality for assistance from the Fund, an applicant's gross household income must fall between 60 and 80 percent of the state's median income levels. For example, a household size of 1 would need to have a total gross yearly income of between $32,065 and $42,753 to qualify. A household of 2 would need to have a yearly income of between $41,932 and $55,908 to qualify. A household of 3 would need to have a yearly income of between $51,798 and $69,063 to qualify. A household of 4 would need to have a yearly income of between $61,664 and $82,218 to qualify. To apply, please visit one of the 36 local Salvation Army offices throughout the state. For more information, call: 1-800-334-3047 if in the Eastern part of Massachusetts (serving area codes 508, 617, 781 and 978) or 1-800-262-1320 if in the Western part of the state (serving area code 413); or visit www.magoodneighbor.org

Mass Energy Consumers Alliance saves money on oil

You can save $100 to $300 on your heating oil by joining the Mass Energy Consumers Alliance for $20, **$10** for people on a fixed income, senior citizens, and retirees. It is free for anyone who has fuel assistance. You need to provide a letter of approval from the fuel assistance agency and send it with your application. Members save from 15 to 30 cents a gallon off of the Massachusetts state average. Reliable full-service dealers will deliver your oil and service your system. Call them at 617-524-3950 or 1-800-287-3950 for more information, in English or Spanish. Their Web site is www.massenergy.org. They are at 284 Amory Street, Boston, MA 02130.

Help with electric and gas bills

Discounted Gas and Electric Rates and Budget Plans

Massachusetts gas and electric utilities must offer a Low Income Discount Rate. The only municipal-run utility company that offers discount rates on gas is Belmont Municipal. To be eligible for electric and gas discounts, you need to receive fuel assistance (LIHEAP) or other assistance under a government program that serves low-income households. Most families receiving Fuel Assistance should be enrolled automatically. Others who qualify should obtain an application from the utility and send it back promptly or simply call the company—the utility should enroll the household right away, and not wait to verify income. For winter 2013/2014, the income limit for eligibility for 1 person is $32,065; for 2, $41,932; for 3, $51,798; for 4, $61,664. For more information, visit www.masslegalhelp.org/housing/ut

Anyone can lower high winter utility bills with budget plans

Utilities offer level monthly payment plans. They estimate annual usage and divide that amount into 12 equal payments.

Any household can get a free "energy audit," conducted by their utility company, listing ways to save on energy bills.

Protection against utility shut-offs

Winter months

During the winter months, gas and electric utility companies cannot shut off utilities for low-income households if those households would be without heat.

No Shut-Off for special people

Utility companies cannot shut off utilities for:

anyone in the household over 65

low-income families with infants

people with serious illnesses who cannot afford to pay their utility bills

tenants whose landlords are responsible for utility bills

Apply by calling your utility company to register for shutoff protection. For the customer service number of your gas or electric company, see the Utilities Directory on the web site of Mass Resources, www.massresources.org/shutoff, or go the Department of Utilities list of Gas and Electric Companies that Serve your City or Town on that web site. If you need more information or have questions about your rights, call the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) at 1-877-886-5066.

Repayment plans

The major utility companies offer arrearage management payment plans. Eligible clients may have their utility debt forgiven up to $1,500 per year while adhering to a structured payment plan. For more information, call your utility company.

Nation Grid gas clients — call 1-800-333-5325

NStar clients — call 1-866-315-2496

Income eligibility

Eligibility is 60% of the state's median income. For 1 person, $32,065; for 2, $41,932; for 3, $51,796; for 4, $61,664.

What to Do If You Are NOT Satisfied with the Utility's Response

The Consumer Division of the State's Department of Public Utilities (DPY) helps consumers resolve disputes with their utility companies. Call the Consumer Division at

1-**877-886-5066** if the utility company makes it difficult to work out a repayment plan or threatens to shut off service where the household is protected from termination.

Help with the telephone bill

You can save on your telephone bill for local service with the telephone company's **Lifeline and Linkup** programs. Anyone on MassHealth, SSI, food stamps, TAFDC, fuel assistance, EAEDC, subsidized housing, or school lunch is eligible. Lifeline reduces monthly telephone bills up to $18.39 a month if you use Verizon, and similar savings for other providers, and Link-Up Link Up provides qualified subscribers with a one-time discount off of the initial installation fee for one traditional, wire line phone service at the primary residence or the activation fee for one wireless phone service. Contact your local telephone company. You may apply for Link-Up assistance when placing an order for telephone service. You may also get a form from the worker at your program. The DTA or the Office of Fuel Assistance needs to verify that you are on one of those programs. Their web site is lifeline.myfamilymobile.com

For households that do not participate in a qualifying public assistance program, the income limit for the Lifeline program is 135% of the federal poverty guidelines. For a family of 1, it is $15,512; for 2, $20,939; for 3, $26,366; for 4, $31,793.

Free cell phone

SafeLink Wireless is a government-supported program that provides a free cell phone plus a choise of three different calling plans for income-eligible customers. The process to qualify for Lifeline Service depends on the State you live in. In Massachusetts, you may qualify if...

1. You already participate in State or Federal assistance program such as SSI, Federal Public Housing Assistance, Food Stamps, MassHealth, EAEDC, TAFDC, fuel assistance, or school lunch,

AND

2. No one in your household currently receives Lifeline Service through another phone carrier.

3. You have a valid United States Postal Address. A P.O. Box is not acceptable.

In addition to meeting the guidelines above you will also be required to provide proof of your participation in an assistance program, or proof of your income level. To request an application, call 1-800-977-3768, or go online at www.safelink.com. You can also apply at your public library.

City Life/Vida Urbana is a 38-year-old bilingual, community organization whose mission is to fight for racial, social and economic justice and gender equality by building working class power through direct action, coalition building, education and advocacy. In organizing poor and working class people of diverse race and nationalities, they promote individual empowerment, develop community leaders, and are building a movement to effect systemic change and transform society. Their roots are in promoting tenant rights and preventing housing displacement. In response to the devastating impact of the foreclosure crisis on communities in Boston, they launched a major campaign in 2007, the Post-Foreclosure Eviction Defense campaign to help keep people facing foreclosure in their homes. Victories won by hundreds of organized families have created public and political pressure, which is driving legislative reform and has inspired the emergence of similar campaigns across the region.

In 2011, a grant from the Open Society Foundations' Neighborhood Stabilization Initiative has made it possible for them to expand this effort beyond Boston. They are now working closely with groups in four other cities and towns within Massachusetts and Rhode Island that have begun to replicate this model. Through regional and national presentations and trainings, CL/VU is extending its impact. CL/VU maintains its core commitment to movement building and working across issues through staff and members' active participation in numerous peace and justice coalitions.

They are located at 284 Amory St., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130. If you need their help or if you want to join their organizing, call them at 617-524-3541. Their email is info@clvu.org. Their web site is www.clvu.org. Fax 617-524-3555.

Work requirement for TAFDC recipients

Sometimes DTA puts pressure on workers to get more parents who receive TAFDC to hold down a job or do work activities of 20 to 30 hours per week. If you are being pressured by your welfare worker to do something you are unable to do, such as hold down or search for a job or another activity for some or all of the hours, ask your legal services office for help. You may be eligible to be exempt from the work requirement or time limit, or you may be eligible for a "good cause" exception.

Going to an education or training program counts toward the work requirement for a total of twelve months. Most kinds of adult education and job training programs count. College programs, including 4-year college, can also count. (You need to major in something that will lead to a job.) Time spent in education and training when you are exempt from the work requirement does not count against your 12 months. If you need more than 12 months, check with Legal Services. There are various ways you may be able to get more time. The fact that a program will last more than 12 months is not legal grounds for DTA to refuse to count it for at least 12 months.

For people in shelter, DTA must treat housing search as fully meeting the work requirement, as long as the housing search you do meets the requirements of the Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter rules or, for non-EA shelters, the shelter's rules — no matter how many hours of housing search you do. However, the current Commissioner is denying extensions of the 24-month time limit to some families that need them on the grounds that they "should" have done more than housing search, even though not required to at the time. Legal services may be able to help, but if you can do another activity, it would be safer, since any family could end up needing TAFDC longer than 24 months.

DTA is not supposed to lower or stop your benefits under the work requirement or your DTA Employment Development Plan if you have good cause, such as:

* you don't have suitable child care in place;
* you don't have affordable and reliable transportation;
* you need to do housing search because you can't stay where you are currently living
* even though you didn't find your own activity, DTA hasn't given you a community service site that is suitable for you and that will take you;
* you are sick, injured, or disabled (this might give you the right to be completely exempt);
* you have to care for a family member who has an illness or disability (this might give you the right to be completely exempt);
* you have a family crisis, an emergency or other compelling circumstance beyond your control;
* you don't want to stay at or accept a job that: violated minimum wage laws; discriminated on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, or physical or mental disability; violated health and safety standards; or was available due to a strike or lockout.

Also, **DTA** is not supposed to lower or stop your benefits without first giving you a chance to talk about whether any good cause reasons apply. If you think DTA made a mistake in lowering or stopping your benefits, quickly file an appeal and contact your local Legal Services Office for help. Faxing your appeal to DTA's Division of Hearings no later than the day before your benefits are supposed to stop or be lowered

gives you the right to keep getting your full benefits until your case is resolved or there's a hearing decision. Call to be sure your fax was received.

Help with housing problems

ABCD in Boston gives housing counseling for people going through eviction, or housing court. Their Housing Court Advocacy (HCA) program is part of the Housing and Homelessness Prevention Department's array of homelessness prevention and stabilization programs. This program helps low and moderate income households living in Boston prevent eviction, maintain their tenancy, and understand their tenant's rights and responsibilities. Their number is 617-348-6347. Their web site is www.bostonabcd.org/housing.search

The HCA program staff advocate for tenants before and during court proceedings to help maintain their tenancy by:

. Educating clients on their rights and responsibilities
. Ensuring clients' rights are observed in the courtroom
. Supporting clients during mediation with a landlord or property manager
. Providing clients with external resources to help maintain their tenancy

When a tenant receives a 14- or 30-day Notice to Quit or is summoned to appear in the Boston Housing Court, Housing Court Advocates may assist the tenant during recertification, eviction, and grievance panel hearings. On an individual basis, HCA staff support clients before and during the court process and seek legal assistance when necessary.

If you face housing discrimination . . .

Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston is the only comprehensive fair housing organization working to eliminate housing discrimination and promote open communities throughout the region. The FHCGB pursues its mission in Suffolk, Norfolk, Middlesex, Essex and Plymouth counties through offering a full tool kit of fair housing services: Housing Counseling, Testing, Case Advocacy, Training, Community Outreach, Policy Advocacy, and Research. Funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, foundation and corporate donors, and individual supporters, the FHCGB works to break the silence surrounding housing discrimination, to offer recourse to people harmed by discrimination, and educate and inform housing professionals and residents of their rights and responsibilities. They are located at 262 Washington Street, 10th floor, Boston, MA 02108. Phone: 617-399-0491. Email: info@bostonfairhousing.org; Web site: www.bostonfairhousing.org

Do you want to help make things better?
If you would like to join other people in making improvements in policy for TAFDC, food stamps, emergency assistance (including family shelters), or housing, there are groups working on these issues who would love to have you join them. They are:

Family Economic Initiative works on issues related to TAFDC (welfare for families with children). They meet once a month at Greater Boston Legal Services, 197 Friend St., Boston. Contact Elizabeth Toulan, 617-603-1626, for more information.

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless works on issues related to housing and homelessness. They also do advocacy for individuals and families who are at risk for or are experiencing homelessness. The Coalition holds monthly membership meetings in Boston. Contact Kelly Turley 781-595-7570, ext. 17 for more information.

The Food Stamp Coalition works on food stamp (now called SNAP) access barriers and a range of state and federal anti-hunger policy issues. They meet once a month in Boston. Contact Pat Baker at Mass Law Reform Institute, pbaker@mlri.org or at 617-357-0700, ext. 328 for more information.

Get money back from Earned Income Tax Credit

You may be eligible to receive up to $5.460 from the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), the tax refund for working people, if you have two children, **$6,143** if you have three children. You earned this money, so don't let your refund go unclaimed.

Who can get the EITC and how much is it worth?

- Single or married people who worked full-time or part-time at some point in 2013 can qualify for the EITC, depending on their income. College students who have a work-study job can get EITC.
- Workers who were raising one child in their home and had income less than $38,511 (or $43,941 for married workers) in 2013 can get an EITC of up to $3,305.
- Workers who were raising two children in their home and had income of less than $43,756 (or $49,186 for married workers).
- Workers who were raising three children or more in their home and had income of less than $46,497 (or $52,427 for married workers) in 2012 can get an EITC of up to $6,143.
- Workers who were not raising children in their home, were between ages 25-64 on December 31, 2013, and had income below $13,980 (or $19, 190 for married workers) can get and EITC up to $496.

If you would like to get an estimate of how much you might be entitled to get back, go to the EITC web site at www.cbpp.org/eic2014/calculator.

You can get EITC Advance Payments in your paychecks. To get EITC Advance payments, give a W-5 form to your employer. You can get the W-5 from your employer, or by calling the IRS at 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676). If you have a checking account, you can have your EITC refund de-

posited directly.

Some people pay money to a private tax company like H&R Block to get help in filing their tax form or to get the money right away. Rather than do that, try to get free advice. Keep the money in your pocket, or save it and use it to build a better future for you and your family. ABCD runs 13 tax preparation sites in Boston. To find the tax preparation site nearest you, go to http://masscashback.ehs.state.ma.us.

A family's earned income tax credit payments do not count as income in determining eligibility or benefit levels for TAFDC, Medicaid, food stamps, SSI, work experience activities (such as community service), or public housing.

To figure your EITC, use a special worksheet included as part of the EITC instructions in form 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ.

Massachusetts workers get an extra state credit worth 15% of their federal credit. You can order a tax form and get more information by calling 617-887-6367 or 1-800-392-6089. Their web site is www.mass.gov/dor.

The Child Tax Credit:

An extra tax break for working families!

The Child Tax Credit (CTC) is a federal tax credit worth up to $1,000 for each qualifying child under age 17 claimed on the worker's tax return. To be eligible for the CTC refund, a single or married worker must:

• have a qualifying child under age 17;

• have taxable earned income above $3,000, and

• have either a Social Security number or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number. Immigrant workers with either type of number may be able to claim the CTC refund.

Eligible families can get up to $1,000 for each qualifying child under age 17 claimed on their tax return.

To get the Child Tax Credit refund, file a federal tax return—Form 1040 or 1040A, but not 1040EZ.

Some families can get the credit even if they owe no income tax. This is called the Additional CTC refund. To find out of you are eligible for this, file form 8812. This form must be attached to the tax return for a family to receive the CTC refund.

Working families can get both the Child Tax Credit refund and the Earned Income Credit. Neither the Earned Income Credit or the Child Tax Credit refund counts as income in determining eligibility for any federal, state or local benefits such as food stamps, SSI, or child care financed even in part by federal funds.

WHO GIVES HELP?

Where can you go for help with rent, food, money, utilities or fuel assistance when your welfare or SSI money runs out, or when you have been kicked off of welfare because of time limits?

The United Way First Call for Help is a good place to begin looking. They can give you information and a referral. Call them at 211. They are open day and night, seven days a week. They have interpreter services for up to 140 different languages. The United Way also has a Substance Abuse Help Line, 1-800-327-5050. They can also give information on **H1N1 or seasonal** flu. They are open 24 hours a day.

Catholic Charities: With 15 sites throughout Greater Boston, Catholic Charities is able to provide a wide range of support, including food pantries, rent and mortgage assistance, utility assistance, assistance in providing furniture, baby supplies, clothing and other necessities, and seasonal and holiday assistance for families who cannot afford a warm meal at Thanksgiving or gifts for their children at Christmas. For a list of their food pantries, click on www.ccab.org/pantries.html;

for a list of their basic needs sites, click on www.ccab.org/basic.html. For a list of their locations, click on www.ccab.org

Salvation Army: Housing and Homeless Services

Group homes, emergency shelters, and transitional living centers provide housing on a temporary basis for varying amounts of time. They:

- serve the homeless by providing food and overnight lodging.
- provide educational, counseling and vocational services to homeless and destitute individuals and families for extended periods.
- address long-term specific issues of youth for whom family care is undesirable or unavailable. Education, counseling, health care and specific training seek to meet the needs of such groups as pregnant teens, emancipated minors, and wards of the juvenile court.
- address specific health or societal driven needs of particular populations.
-

Family service programs help families and needy individuals with emergency food, housing, utility assistance and other needs.

Salvation Army programs vary with local needs. For information on specific programs and locations, contact your local Salvation Army Corps Community Center by doing a zip code search on their website's Location field at www.salvationarmyusa.org

ABCD in Boston gives housing counseling for people going through eviction, or housing court. If Boston residents have a letter of eviction from the landlord or a summons for housing court, the counselor will assess if there are any funding opportunities. They also do mortgage and foreclosure counseling. They offer housing search workshops that focus on how to apply for Boston Housing Authority and other subsidized housing. Their number is 617-348-6347. Their web site is www.bostonabcd.org/housing.search

Family Aid Boston (formerly Travelers Aid Family Service), 617-542-9482, has a program to provide short-term emergency shelter to Boston families in crisis, working in collaboration with the Mayor's Hotline.

There is also a homeless prevention program for Boston families to help pay back rent, if funds are available, and the agency provides shelter and stabilization services for homeless families referred from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. They have an employment service to assist families in their programs with finding jobs, advancing their careers, and furthering their education.

Call for eligibility requirements, Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM–4:30 PM. Staff bilingual in Spanish translation are available. Their web site is www.familyaidboston.org

Local towns: Some organizations operate on a town-by-town basis. Their numbers can be found in the phone book, or by dialing 411. These include local churches and civic clubs, including: Kiwanis, Elks, Lions, Knights of Columbus, Rotary, Quota, Jaycees, and The Masons.

Mary Moore, Survivors, Inc. President, Lenore Pereira, and Laurie Taymor-Berry

Help for Veterans

Veterans can get some help at their local Veteran's Services. The federal Department of Veterans Affairs has published a book that lists benefits, Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents. It is available online at www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits.book.asp

Housing and homelessness

If you are experiences homelessness or at imminent risk . .

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in Massachusetts offers services and money to families experiencing homelessness at their Division of Housing Stabilization offices, located at DTA offices. They assess your situation and try to help you work out a plan to avoid or exit homelessness. If you are a pregnant woman or family with children under the age of 21 and need shelter, a worker will help you. If you are an unaccompanied adult, you can apply for a shelter bed directly through a shelter provider. An online list of adult shelter providers can be found online at http://www.mahomeless.org/get-help/single-adult.

HomeBASE "Household Assistance"

Household Assistance is part of the **HomeBASE** program for homeless families with children and pregnant women who have no place to stay. To get Household Assistance, you need to apply for and be otherwise eligible for Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter. Household Assistance is up to $4,000 a year. The money is to help your family move into or keep short-term housing. The $4,000 can pay expenses for you to move somewhere else, to help you stay with someone you know, or to help you stay where you are now. DHCD will make these payments to a landlord, utility company, or moving company or in the form of payments to your host — not to you.

Household Assistance may not be the right answer for your family. You can still get EA shelter if you need it and your family meets the current eligibility standards for the EA program.

If you go into a shelter, you will get help looking for housing you can afford for a longer time. You may be able to get HomeBASE rental assistance later to help you exit shelter.

Are you sure $4,000 is enough money to keep your family in housing for one full year? If the whole $4,000 is spent before the end of 12 months and you end up homeless again, you will not be able to get any more help from HomeBASE for the rest of the 12-month period, under current rules. Separate resources, however, may be available.

How will Household Assistance affect the family you are staying with? Your host's landlord must agree that your family can stay before Household Assistance will be approved. You may have to be added to the lease. Your host's rent may go up. If Household Assistance pays all of your host's rent or utilities, it could be counted as income for your host. Your host may get fewer benefits, such TAFDC, EAEDC, or SSI.

You can file an appeal if you feel you were forced to take or wrongly denied Household Assistance. Contact legal services or someone else you trust for advice or for help with your appeal.

If you have questions about HomeBASE, you can call also

call the Homeless Family Call-in Line at the Massachusetts Law Reform: 617-357-0700 x376 or the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless: 781-595-7570. To find your local legal services program, call the Legal Advocacy & Resource Center: 1-800-342-5297 or go to www.MassLegalHelp.org/find-legal-aidDCHD's Recipient Services Line: 1-877-418-3308. You can

Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) Homelessness Prevention Program

If you and your family are at imminent risk of homelessness, you may be eligible for Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT), a state-funded homelessness prevention program administered by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the statewide network of Housing Consumer Education Centers (HCECs). For state fiscal year 2014, which began on July 1, 2013, RAFT currently is funded at $10 million. The program is targeted to families with children under the age of 21 and/or pregnant women with incomes at or below 50% of area median income, with at least 90% of the funds for families at or below 30% of area median income. Eligible families may receive up to $4,000 in a 12-month period to pay for expenses to avoid homelessness or rapidly exit homelessness. In the Boston area, RAFT is administered by **Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership's HCEC,** 617-425-6700.

The HCEC provides limited financial assistance when available (such as RAFT), and they can help with other types of housing resources and advocacy year-round. **If you** are a homeowner and would like to talk with their foreclosure counselor, contact Stephen Freeman at 617-425-6761. More information is on their website, www.mbhp.org.

Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, 781-595-7570, provides information and advocacy, and lobbies for better policies for families, adults, and unaccompanied youth who are at-risk or experiencing homelessness. In Boston, the Coalition advocates work with community health centers, public schools, and early intervention programs to provide homelessness prevention services. The Coalition also operates a furniture bank for households exiting homelessness into housing and other low-income households. The Mass. Coalition for the Homeless is located at 15 Bubier Street, Lynn, MA 01901. Their website is: **www.mahomeless.org**. They have a lot of information and materials there.

Boston residents who are homeless after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends, can call the Boston Mayor's Hotline at 617-635-4500, for information and referral**.** During weekday hours, call the Emergency Shelter Commission at 617-534-5395 for information and referral**.** Families with children and pregnant women can apply for shelter benefits through the Department of Housing and Community Development's Division of Housing Stabilization. In Boston, DHCD has staff in the same building as the DTA office at 2201 Washington Street, Dudley Square, Roxbury, phone 617-989-6100.

Free furniture/household goods

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless runs a furniture bank for families and individuals from across the state who are transferring from a shelter to an apartment, are in a doubled-up situation after losing housing, have been referred by the DCF, DTA, or emergency shelter, or are homeless due to domestic violence. The furniture bank also provides blankets and other household goods, when available. Furniture is donated and is in good condition. Call the Donations Assistance Program at 781-595-7570, ext. 13. A staff person loads the furniture on to a truck, but the organization does not provide a truck. They are located at 15 Bubier Street, Lynn, MA 01901. Their web site is www.donations@mahomeless.org. Their web site lists other furniture banks in Massachusetts.

Craigslist online has free furniture and other items. It lists by region. Click on "free stuff."

Health care

MassHealth

MassHealth is the Massachusetts version of Medicaid. It is a public health insurance program for eligible low and medium-income residents of Massachusetts. People who receive

TAFDC, SSI, or EAEDC are automatically eligible for MassHealth, and disabled people are eligible. To find out if you are eligible, call 1-888-665-9993 (TTY: 1-888-665-9997) and request an application, or download the application on their website, MassResources.org. Use the online MassHealth Eligibility check to see if you might qualify for benefits. To find a doctor or a dentist, or other health care provider in your area, call MassHealth Customer Service at 1-800-841-2900 (TTY: 1-800-497-4648).

Commonwealth Care

Commonwealth Care is a health insurance program for low and moderate-income residents who don't have health insurance. Commonwealth Care members get free or low cost health services through managed care health plans. There are several health plans to choose from. Private health insurance companies offer the plans. Some plans cost more than other plans.

To apply, call 1-877-623-6765 (TTY 1-877-623-7773). You can download the application at Commonwealth Care Application (Medical Benefit Request). You can get help with your application at helpmeapply@bmchp.org. Also, you can call the Health Care For All Helpline at 1-800-272-4232 to get help filling out an application over the phone.

You can get an application at your health center or hospital.

The Health Safety Net is a program for Massachusetts residents who are not eligible for health insurance, co not have coverage for all medically necessary services, or can't afford to buy it. The Health Safety Net is sometimes called **Free** Care. The goal of the Safety Net is to make sure that all Massachusetts residents can get health care when they need it, regardless of income.

People of any income with large medical bills that they cannot pay are also eligible. Your citizenship or immigration status does not affect your eligibility. For low-income residents, the Health Safety Net (Free Care) pays for medically necessary services at Massachusetts community health centers (CHCs) and hospitals. To be covered, services must be on the MassHealth Standard list of covered services. The Safety Net pays all of the cost, or part of the cost, depending on age and income. The Safety Net also helps families with medical hardships who do not have enough income to pay their medical bills.

Most people must file a MassHealth application to get Health Safety Net (Free Care) benefits. You can file your application at a community health center (CHC) or hospital, or you can send your application directly to MassHealth. If you are applying for Medical Hardship, you must file a Special Circumstances Application (SPCA) at a CHC or hospital. You can call the Help Desk at 1-877-910-2100 for more information, or go to their web site at www.massresources.org/hsn.html

MCPHS Pharmacy Outreach is a free, confidential service available to all Massachusetts residents who are seeking information regarding their medications, and may be able to refer them to places that would help them pay for their medication. Whether you are having difficulties affording your medications or want to know what the side effects are to your prescriptions, MCPHS Pharmacy Outreach can help. By calling a toll-free help line at 1-866-633-1617, visiting our walk-in center at 25 Foster Street, Worcester, MA, or accessing our web site (http://www.massmedline.com), patients will receive information about their medications, prescription drug coverage, including the Medicare Drug benefit, and assistance with accessing affordable prescription drug programs. They are available Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

Questions about health care?

Call Health Care For All's helpline at 1-800-272-4232. Health Care for All is a non-profit Massachusetts advocacy agency that promotes affordable and comprehensive health coverage for all groups. Their work combines policy analysis, information referral, personal and legal advocacy, community organizing and public education. They give help by phone or by email. They do not take walk-ins. Their website is: www.hcfama.org. They are located at 30 Winter Street, 10th floor, at Downtown Crossing, Boston.

Health care for the homeless

Boston Health Care for the Homeless program provides health care for homeless men, women, and children in the greater Boston area at clinics, overnight and day shelters, family and domestic violence shelters and Boston hospitals. They have a Respite Program for homeless individuals who are not sick enough to be in the hospital, but too sick to be on the street or in a shelter. Call 857-654-1000, or visit one of their sites, for more information. Their web site is www.bhchp.org. They are located at 780 Albany Street, Boston.

Medical equipment for disabled children

Pass it On gives pediatric medical equipment for disabled children up to age 22, including wheel chairs, standers, gait trainers, daily living aids, and related equipment. They will pick up and drop off items from eastern Massachusetts to Worcester. While the equipment is free, they ask for help in paying for transporting the equipment, on a sliding scale. Call 1-800-267-6768. Their web site is www.passitonforkids.org. They are open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Wednesday.

Help with children's clothing

The Children's Clothing Exchange, a program of Solutions at Work, is at the Roosevelt Towers Housing Complex, 391 Evereteze Way, Cambridge, MA 02141. Phone (617) 576-0039. Open Tuesdays 10:00-4:00; Wednesdays 10:00 – 8:00, and Thursday 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and the second and fourth Saturdays of most months from 10:00 – 4:00.

You trade your child's outgrown clothing, books, toys, and gear for age appropriate items. If you do not have children's items to trade, you can volunteer your time to earn credits that you can use to receive items for your child. They have professional clothing for women and men who are entering a job, by appointment and referral. Families in crisis don't need to exchange on their first visit. Free children's books and toys and baby strollers and car seats are available.

They have a large, cheerful play space that kids are welcome to use while their parents browse for items. They also offer free arts and crafts on the second and fourth Saturday of most months from 11:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Children's Clothing Exchange participants are welcome to join at no charge. Others are welcome for a suggested donation of $10 per child and/or a donation of children's clothing.

Their web site is solutionsatwork.org/our-program

Free and low-cost legal help

Harvard Legal Aid Bureau, 617-495-4408, provides free legal services to low-income people. They specialize in housing law, including individual evictions from public and private apartments; family law, including divorce, child custody, paternity visitation and support issues; government benefits law, including appeals of the denial or termination of welfare and food stamps, unemployment, or social security disability benefits; and wage and labor law, including nonpayment or underpayment of wages. They are located at 23 Everett St., Cambridge, MA 02138. They are open from 9 to 5 Monday through Friday. Call for an appointment. Their web site is www.harvardlegalaid.org

The National Lawyer's Guild's Lawyer Referral Service provides affordable legal assistance to low to middle-income people by matching individuals with attorneys. Referrals are free of charge. They do not provide free legal services, but attorneys provide a free initial phone conversation. Fees are sometimes negotiated on a case-by-case basis. Referrals can be placed in English or Spanish, and attorneys are available who speak a wide variety of languages.

Their hours are Monday through Thursday, 10:00 – 4:00. Call 617-227-7008. Referrals can be placed online 24/7. They serve the Massachusetts area. Information on legal issues and contacts for pro-bono legal assistance can be found on their website www.NLGlawyerreferralservice.org

Disability Law Center of Massachusetts, 617-723-8455 or 1

-800-872-9992, provides legal advocacy on disability issues to people in Massachusetts who have a wide range of physical, psychiatric, sensory and cognitive disabilities. DLC serves individuals who experience discrimination, abuse or neglect, or denial of services because of their disability. They handle access to community services, special education, health care, disability benefits, and rights and conditions in facilities. DLC does not handle general legal problems such a obtaining a divorce, filing for bankruptcy, or trust and estate issues. They are at 11 Beacon St. #925, Boston, MA 02108. Their web site is www.dlc-ma.org.

Help available for immigrants

Greater Boston Legal Services at 617-371-1234 represents immigrants.

The Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) provides trainings, advocacy, and information to promote the rights and integration of immigrants and refugees. They involve an active membership of 130 organizations. They do not provide services to individuals, but can refer people to one of their member organizations. Call 617-350-5480. Their web site is www.miracoalition.org

The Irish International Immigrant Center has supported Irish immigrants since 1989 and has grown into a multi-service center for people from 120 countries helping them find their place in our multicultural society. Promoting civic engagement and facilitating cultural integration, they work in the US and also in Ireland. Advocating for social change, their vision is one of an integrated society in which all people are treated with respect, dignity and enjoy equal opportunities and protections. They give legal assistance in the following areas: Adjustment of status; Consular Processing; Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA); Employment authorization; Family-based petitions; Naturalization/Citizenship; Temporary Protected Status. They give legal help in filings with USCIS. Their non-legal services include ESL, legislative advocacy, psychological or psychiatric services, referral to other services, social services. They are located at 100 Franklin St., Lower Level, Boston, MA 02110. Phone 617-542-7654. For more information, visit their website http://www.iiicenter.org/

Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigration Office, 617-464-8100, helps refugees, asylees, and Cuban and Haitian parolees (people who have been detained by the U.S. Department of Justice and are now on parole). Their services include: cash assistance, employment assistance, case management, English classes, and social service referrals. They also have ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes.

Asylees can receive services for eight months. It is best to ask for services within the first month after getting asylum status, when they are eligible for more services such as cash assistance and employment services. They are located at 2 75 W. Broadway, South Boston, MA 02127. Their web site is www.ccab.org/refugees

The Political Asylum/ Immigration Representation Project (PAIR) is a nationally recognized *pro bono* model that works to secure safety and freedom for asylum-seekers who have fled from persecution throughout the world and to promote the rights of immigrants unjustly detained. PAIR provides hope and a new beginning to asylum-seekers, torture survivors and immigration detainees.

PAIR was formed in 1989, a coalition of legal services agencies, civil rights and civil liberties organizations, and bar associations responded to meet an emergency need for legal representation of 83 workers, mostly from El Salvador, whom the INS arrested at the Suffolk Downs racetrack in Revere, Massachusetts.

The Asylum Program is the leading program in Massachusetts to recruit, mentor and train attorneys from private law firms to represent without charge low-income asylum-seekers who have fled from persecution throughout the world. The goal of this program is to secure safety for people who have tried to exercise freedoms we take for granted: the right to express opinions, freedom of speech and assembly, or the right to practice a religion.

The Detention Program, launched in 1990, is the only immigration legal services program with negotiated access to all three major ICE detention centers in Massachusetts. PAIR has advised and represented over 1,000 immigration detainees who originally came from throughout the world. PAIR accomplishes this work through staff attorneys, fellows, *pro bono* attorneys from the AILA New England Chapter and private practices, and five law school immigration clinical programs.

Call for an appointment, 617-742-9296. Their web site is www.pairproject.org

Community Legal Services and Counseling Center, 617-661-1010, 1 West St., Cambridge, provides legal aid and affordable psychological counseling services to low-income individuals and families in the Greater Boston area. These include free legal services in the areas of domestic violence and abused children, individuals, families, and senior citizens at risk of homelessness, people with disabilities, and refugees and immigrant victims of torture, gender-based violence, and other types of crimes. Counseling fees are assessed on a sliding scale basis. Call the office for information on specific services. Their web site is www.clsacc.org

Help for parents under stress

The Parental Stress Line (Parents Helping Parents) is a toll-free hotline to give support to parents who are under stress. It is available for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They have parent support groups, which

are anonymous and confidential. Call 1-800-632-8188.

Higher Education

American Student Assistance can help you find scholarships if you are income eligible, choose a college, complete admission and financial aid applications, get your college admission fee waived, and get advice on paying for college. You can talk with an advisor, use their computers to find scholarships, and look through their resource books — all free of charge.

There are Student Assistance centers in Boston, Brockton, Chelsea, and Cambridge. The Boston phone number is 617-536-0200 (in the Concourse level of the Boston Public Library). They are open 9-6:30 Monday-Thursday and 9-4:30 Friday and Saturday. The Brockton phone number is 508-586-3100. The Chelsea phone number is 617-823-4720. The web site is www.asa.org/plan

Urban College of Boston (UCB)

UCB is a two-year college that provides inner-city residents, who might otherwise never go to college, a highly supportive environment that integrates a college education with career preparation and skill development and both encourages and enables students to transfer to four-year institutions to complete their bachelor's degrees. The College offers courses in multiple languages, including Spanish and Chinese (both Mandarin and Cantonese). In addition, free tutoring is offered in the same languages.

Along with three excellent Associate degree programs and numerous certificate programs, UCB offers students case management and support services (including referral health services, personal counseling and job placement) that enable them to stay in school and complete their degrees.

Urban College offers college credit for job-training and staff development programs, creating a direct link between these programs and the world of higher education. The College also provides relevant internship opportunities for students. Urban College is authorized to provide federal Pell Grants to eligible students.

UCB is located at 178 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02111. Call 617-348-6353 or email contact@urbancollege.edu to find out how you can get started today.

Scholarship help for low-income women

The Patsy Takemoto Mink Fellowship each year gives scholarships of $3,000 to assist low-income women to achieve an educational objective. The fellowship is named for the woman who represented her native Hawaii in the U.S. Congress. She fought against welfare reform in Congress. Her daughter Gwendolyn Mink, author of *Welfare's End*, established the fellowship, along with Patsy Mink's husband, to honor her deceased mother. To apply, go to their web site at www.patsyminkfoundation.org/edsupport.html

Education and Training

St. Mary's Center for Women and Children, 617-436-8600, at Uphams Corner in Dorchester, MA, offers innovative and family-centered programs for women and children who have experienced trauma and are living in poverty. They provide shelter, clinical and educational services, job training, employment placement, and search for affordable permanent housing. Their GRLZ.org program operates an on-campus web-based broadcasting station and builds social, academic, and work competencies for at-risk girls. Their web site is www.stmaryscenterma.org

On the State House Steps - One of Dottie's Prize Photos

Project Hope — Free Adult Education, Child Care and Health Care training programs

Project Hope's programs include basic literacy, GED preparation, career advising, transition to college support, case management, leadership development, and English for Speakers of Other Languages. They offer a basic **adult education** to more than 80 low-income women a year. They train low-income women for **childcare careers.** They offer free Health Care training programs for entry-level health care positions, in partnership with community health organizations.

Interested Candidates: Read the Open House Information at www.prohope.org/openhouse_faq.htm and complete the Registration Form. If you have questions, please call 617-442-1880 ext. 218 to leave a message. A staff member will return your call.

YMCA Training, Inc.

This is a 5-month training program for jobs in Medical Office, Insurance, Banking, and Administrative and Office support. There are internship opportunities in an 8-week internship. There is assistance in job matching and job search. There are long-term partnerships with major employers.

Extra services include: ESOL English Pronunciation classes; additional tutoring in computers, math, and writing; individual mentors help each trainee and graduate prepare for and conduct successful a job search; support and referrals for medical, counseling, child care, housing, legal, and CORI issues.

The program hours are from 9am-4pm, Mon thru Friday. Must have a High School diploma or GED.
This is a professional environment with a dress code.

To apply, call David Pina at 617-542-1800, ext. 128. Their web site is www.ymcaboston.org/traininginc

Emergency birth control

In the United States, anyone of any age can purchase Plan B One-step emergency contraception over the counter at most pharmacies, and health centers. Costs vary from $30 to $65. You need to be 17 or over to buy Next Choice.One Dose and My Way without a prescription. If you are 16 or younger, you will need a prescription to get those pills.

If you have had unprotected sex or think your birth control method has failed, you can use the "morning-after-pill" to prevent pregnancy. Just ask your pharmacist for Plan B One-Step. Emergency contraception works best if taken as soon as possible and within 5 days after sex. If you are sexually active, it is good to have it on hand just in case. If a pharmacy refuses to give you the pill, call the Emergency Contraceptive Hotline, 1-888-not-2-lat (1-888-668-2528), on go to the Emergency Contraception Website, ec.princeton.edu. The Website gives the name of a pharmacy near you where you can get the pill.

More useful information

The DTA Recipient Services Office is very helpful in giving information about policy and what you are entitled to. Call 1-800-445-6604.

DTA regulations are available on the Web: **www.state.ma.us/dta**.

Benefits for Massachusetts residents

MassResources.org describes state and federal benefits available to Massachusetts residents.

Childcare benefits regulations and other information are available on the Web at **www.mass.gov/eec**, which is the website for the state Office of Child Care Services.

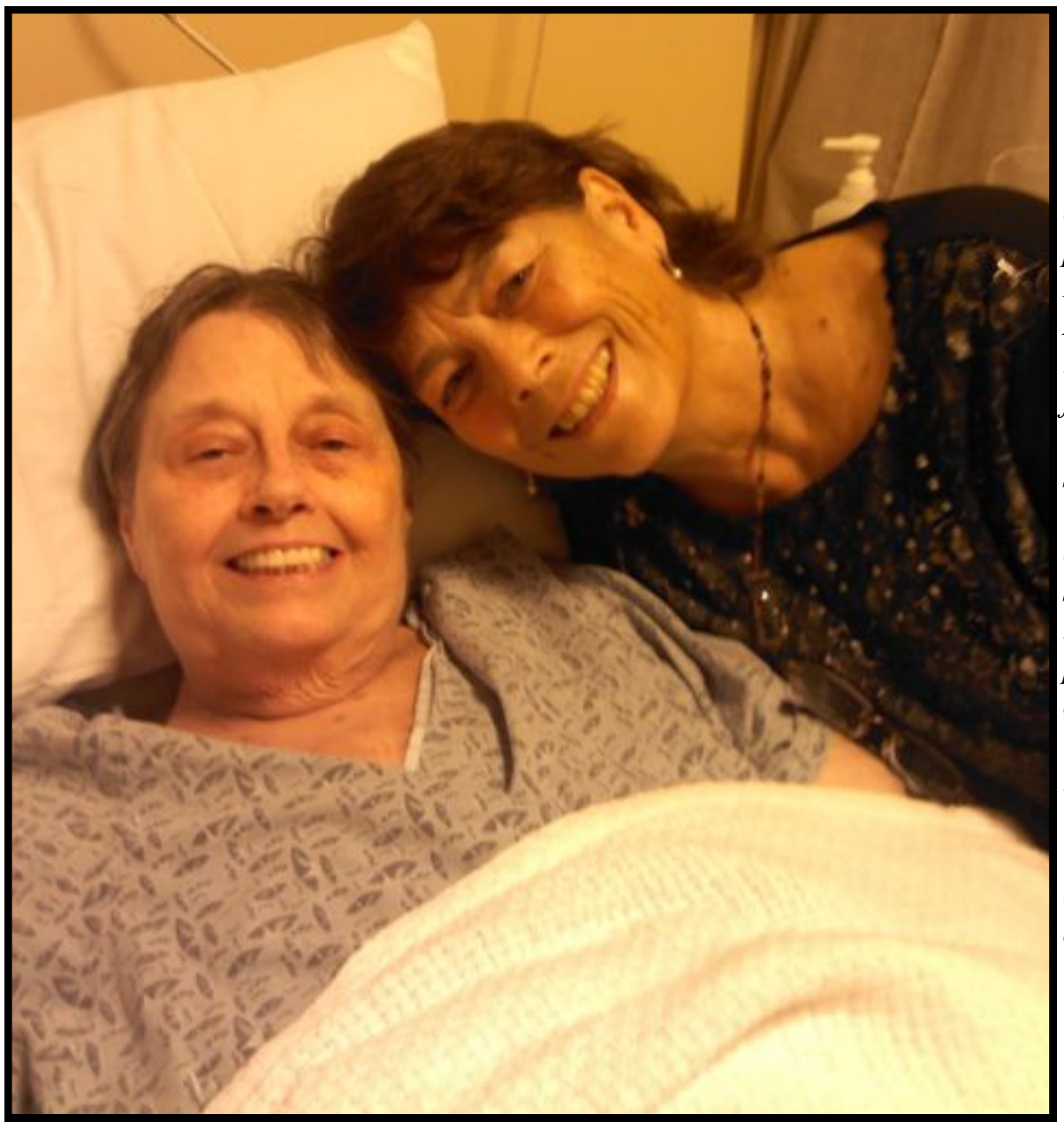
Coming Home: Directory: A Resource Directory for Ex-Offenders Returning to Greater Boston Communities is a comprehensive resource book published by the Crime and Justice Institute. It is available online at www.cominghomedirectory.org. The directory is published by the Crime and Justice Institute, 617-482-2520, ext. 130.

Elder Resource Guide is published by the Brookline Council on Aging and the Brookline Senior Center. It contains a wealth of information for elders. It is available online at www.brooklinema.gov. Click on "Departments," "Council on Aging," and "Elder Resource Guide."

Do you have a Criminal Record? Do you have trouble finding jobs or housing because of your CORI? If you have a CORI and need information about jobs, housing, sealing your record, mistakes on your CORI or other problems, call the Legal Advocacy and Resource Center at 617-603-1700. For more information about CORI law, visit www.masslegalhelp.org/cori.

The Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy Benefits Access Line, for teen parents and people who work with them. They answer questions about welfare, food stamps, housing, childcare or other services in your area that teens and their children might be eligible for. Call 617-482-9122, x2.

Jane Doe, Inc. A hot line, sponsored by the Mass. Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, helps people who are sexually assaulted or fleeing from domestic violence. Call (617) 248-0922.

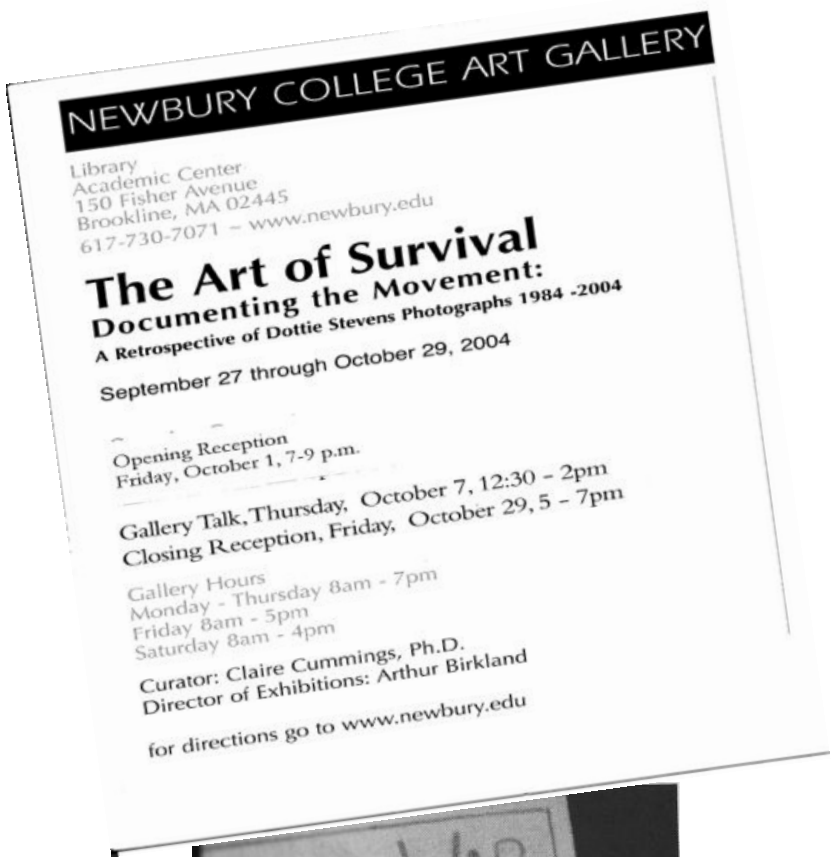


"Survival Tips" are created, culled, compiled and written by Betty Reid Mandell. All of the information has been checked carefully prior to publication as recently as possible. Of course, things can and do change, agencies sometimes use up their money or change their policies. If you have questions about this information, or if you have a useful survival tip, you can reach Betty at 617-327-4219 or by email at mmandell@curry.edu

Good bye my beautiful, beloved "BFF". I love that you called me your Best Friend Forever to everyone, I am so honored. Dottie, I will never forget you. The times and work we shared together I think are wonders to behold and I am so proud of all the achievements we made together. You were more than the best friend, you are my hero, my mentor, my role model, my inspiration to reach higher. Your belief in me is what helped me to believe in myself. There are so many memories flooding my mind of our hanging out together and having fun, not just work, work, work! All the rides we took to Revere Beach for clams and fries, to Eastie for real Italian spaghetti, all the meetings we drove to in my car with you the best navigator around to find all the obscure addresses in Boston, the second had shops we cruised regularly, and sharing our confidences and our pain when we were hurting. You were the only person in my life whose shoulder I ever cried on. Our warm affection, our hysterical sense of humor, and oh, the dinners, I will miss it all. Dottie you gave me the love and acceptance , but most of all, the understanding I had been craving all my life. I love you forever and my heart will hold you and miss your sweetness until the day I die. RIP

CELEBRATING A BRILLIANT LIFE!

R.I.P. Dottie's beautiful, beloved daughter, Teresa Kech, who passed away in February.



NEWBURY COLLEGE ART GALLERY

Library
Academic Center
150 Fisher Avenue
Brookline, MA 02445
617-730-7071 – www.newbury.edu

The Art of Survival
Documenting the Movement:
A Retrospective of Dottie Stevens Photographs 1984 -2004

September 27 through October 29, 2004

Opening Reception
Friday, October 1, 7-9 p.m.

Gallery Talk, Thursday, October 7, 12:30 – 2pm
Closing Reception, Friday, October 29, 5 – 7pm

Gallery Hours
Monday - Thursday 8am - 7pm
Friday 8am - 5pm
Saturday 8am - 4pm

Curator: Claire Cummings, Ph.D.
Director of Exhibitions: Arthur Birkland

for directions go to www.newbury.edu

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DOTTIE STEVENS

Solidarity Forever—Members of the National Welfare Rights Union (from Detroit),the Mass. Welfare Rights Union, and Survivors Inc. met in June 2007to review our joint history and discuss national strategy.

Survivors, Inc. Primavera / Verano 2014

NOTICIAS DE SUPERVIVENCIA

Volumen 16 Numero 1 . . . *las voces de las mujeres de bajos ingdresos*

Dorothy "Dottie" Kech - Stevens

21 de octubre de 1941 – 27 de marzo, 2014

Ex candidato para gobernador de Massachusetts, Mattapan mujer del año, Organizador de la Comunidad, Activista de Herechos Civiles, Editor, Líder de Las Ciudades de Derechos Humanos, Querido Amigo y Madre

Dottie Stevens ha fallecido en las instalaciones de enfermería casa de Coolidge en Brookline, MA en jueves, 27 de marzo de 2014, poner fin a su larga batalla con el cáncer. Era valiente luchadora y defensora de las mujeres y los menos afortunados. Fue un feroz defensor de la justicia y fue firme en su lucha por los derechos humanos para todos. En sus últimos meses y días, organizando desde su cama del hospital "la oficina", dirigió sus proyectos de Sobrevivientes, Inc., *Noticias de Supervivencia* y las ciudades de derechos humanos, hacer y recibir llamadas, trabajando sobre subsidios y presupuestos y dirigir reuniones de cabecera. A lo largo de su larga enfermedad, sus amigos y familiares forman un círculo de atención denominado "Equipo DOTTIE: compartir el bueno" para abogar por ella para asegurarse de que este feroz defensora de otros tenía las 24 horas cada. Que ella fundó, con otros, noticias de supervivencia y los sobrevivientes, Inc. en 1987, como una consecuencia del grupo defensa de los recursos para la Supervivencia Moderna, (A.R.M.S.,brazos), la organización empezó cuando ella era estudiante y recibió su maestría en la Universidad de Público y Servicio Comunitario de UMass/Boston. *Noticias de supervivencia* y los Sobrevivientes, Inc. se convirtió en el más largo, publica continuamente, original, diario de lucha contra la pobreza de las mujeres, proporcionando una voz por, para y sobre la experiencia y los efectos de la pobreza en las mujeres y los niños en los Estados Unidos, durante los últimos 27 años. Dottie y la organización y la revista recibieron numerosos premios y honores durante estos años, culminando en tener sus registros históricos incluidos en la Colección de Historia Archivos del Smith College la Sophia Smith femenina, archivo de historia de las mujeres más grande y antigua en los Estados Unidos Su liderazgo, su experiencia, su compasión, su sabiduría, su apoyo incondicional, su oratoria apasionada a nivel nacional y local, su amistad leal y inclusivenes inspiro a muchos a llegar mucho mas lejos que alguna vez creyeron que podian. Dottie fue buscado y habló ante innumerables audiencias diversas, con autoridad, dignidad y respeto que se movía cada audiencia, si era enormes o pequeñas manifestaciones ante la legislatura, a testificar en audiencias, en las aulas pequeñas, o en las convenciones nacionales, su mensaje de esperanza y llamadas a la acción eran claras, auténtica y eficaz. Con ánimo de Dottie y creer en nuestras capacidades, que trabajaron con ella pudimos escribir, hablar, organizar, educar y crear nosotros mismos fuera de la pobreza y el olvido. Su dulce espíritu, su voz fuerte, su amor que todo lo abarca, su incansable lucha contra la pobreza y su sabiduría lo extrañaremos mucho por todo lo que sabía, amado, respetado y admirado. Que descanse en paz habiendo dejado al mundo un lugar mejor que lo encontró modificando específicamente las vidas y las posibilidades de cientos de mujeres y niños y de todos aquellos que conoció que fueron lo suficientemente afortunados para compartir la esfera de su duradera y de todos aquellos que fueron lo suficientemente afortunados para compartir la esfera de sue legado perdurable. Sale de sus tres hijos, José, Corey y Steven; sus hermanas Patricia y Bárbara; hermanos, Robert y Pablo y muchos nietos. Un funeral conjunto Dottie y su recientemente fallecida hija, Teresa, se celebrará en junio de 2014 temprano en Santo Redentor iglesia de East Boston seguida de su entierro en el cementerio Santa Cruz en Malden, Massachusetts. Un tema conmemorativo de supervivencia noticias, dedicado a la memoria de Dottie y que contiene todos los homenajes que se han enviado estará disponible en el sitio web: survivorsinc.org, el 15 de junio de 2014. En lugar de flores, por favor enviar donaciones a *Supervivencia Noticias,* c/o Eric Mello, 42 Todd Lane, S. Weymouth, MA

Dorothy Kech-Stevens 1941-2014 En su compleaños 65.

por Claire Cummings