

R E S I D E N T S '

Journal

A publication for and by the residents of the Chicago Housing Authority January 1998 /Volume 2/ Number 2



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O u r M i s s i o n

This publication is committed to the journalistic principles of fair representation and free speech. Above all else, this publication will strive to fairly and accurately represent all sides of the issues that the editorial staff chooses to investigate. In maintaining an unwavering guarantee of editorial independence, this publication will contribute to the American media's mission of faithfully providing balanced, truthful accounts and information.

Residents' Journal strives to be accessible to all communities, regardless of income, ethnicity or disability.

The Chicago Housing Authority will not censor this publication in any way and is committed to the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution which protects the Freedom of the Press.

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RJ Wishes Joe Shuldiner a Speedy Recovery

Editor's Box

by Ethan Michaeli

Education (CADRE) Like all of us, Jimmy had built his strength on the trials and tribulations of life. Jimmy told me all about those trials when we distributed the October edition of RJ.



Saturday, Nov. 22, due to complications from Sickle Cell Anemia, a painful illness most common to African Americans. Among his many activities, Jimmy was an active member of the **Residents' Journal** staff who had participated in distributing the paper over several seasons.

Many of the writers and editors on the staff first met Jimmy when he came to our November meeting with his two young sons. Although he hadn't yet written an article for **RJ**, Jimmy was an active, enthusiastic participant. He came up with ideas for new stories, made some keen observations about other topics and displayed an overall dedication to the paper that inspired me and the other participants.

But Jimmy impressed us in another way as well. Even while he participated in the meeting, Jimmy made sure to pay attention to his sons. He seemed to always find something for them to do, whether it was opening the security door for a latecomer or finding a

But Jimmy wasn't bitter or angry about this realization. He reasoned that

Jimmy's Rock Bottom

piece of paper for them to draw. Jimmy was a patient, creative dad who seemed able to effortlessly divide his attention in half. His boys looked back at him with respect, admiration and love. In short, he was the kind of father that so many children today are missing.

The **RJ** staff was not the only group of people who had noticed that Jimmy was a special person. The Local Advisory Council at Lathrop Homes had long ago noticed that Jimmy was a trustworthy, community-oriented resident. Whenever asked, Jimmy would go to meetings whether the topic was fascinating or downright dull. With all the myriad laws, regulations and changes taking place in the world of CHA residents, Jimmy attended meetings in which an angry crowd would threaten to overflow and in which a near-empty room would be pin-drop silent. But Jimmy always was the voice of reason; for the angry, he would offer a sober analysis; for those who were threatening to doze, Jimmy was there to remind that from tedious plans emerge great things.

Jimmy's contributions have not gone unnoticed. After Jimmy's passing, the Friends of the River announced that they would dedicate to him a portion of the river front that he had worked to rehabilitate. Residents and others who stroll along the river front path in the near future will see Jimmy's name on the trail.

On our front page, you can see Jimmy in the upper left, standing proud and holding an award he received from Combatting Alcohol and Drugs through Rehabilitative

others had it worse. "Everybody has a different rock bottom," Jimmy told me. "Mine was waking up broke every day, regardless of how hard I worked."

From 'rock bottom,' Jimmy began the long climb back to a decent life. He joined CADRE and accepted the advice and support of others who had found their 'rock bottom.' The award he received at the CADRE Awards banquet Oct. 17, just a few weeks before his death, symbolized the grace and dignity with which Jimmy had made that climb.

This edition of **Residents' Journal** marks significant progress in several ways. This is our first bi-monthly edition, a result of the incredible success we experienced in 1997. This issue also includes articles in Chinese, Russian and Korean. The articles in this issue are translations of "CHA to Buy Back Laundry Tokens," which appears on page 17. But we all hope that the presence of these articles will inspire CHA residents who are native speakers of these languages to join our staff. Ultimately, **Residents' Journal** will be a multi-lingual, multi-cultural team which reflects and reports on the unique community which is CHA.

As we move forward with increasing strength and confidence, we realize that it would not have been possible without the contributions of all of those who have built **Residents' Journal**.

On the inevitable late, late nights when I edit and design the paper, I will look at Jimmy's smiling face on this issue's cover and be inspired. I know that he is lending us his strength, intelligence and good humor.

The Mighty Residents

by Izora Davis

Here I am in Boston, anticipating to see low-income residents of public housing that have fought for safe, decent, sanitary, affordable housing as well as managing their own dwellings. My thoughts are: what a sight to see!!

As the cab drives along the streets, I see beautiful housing and businesses flourishing everywhere. I wonder: where is this public housing? As we slowly approach the area, I see high rises but they do not look like public housing to me.

As usual, my mind starts to think back on Chicago and the flight toward new mixed income communities. I wonder if I'll see housing that compares to the idea of mixed-income communities in Chicago - the beautiful architecturally-designed housing with spacious rooms that will serve families with children. This vision is very much different from the housing as we now know it and live in it. A smile instantly comes upon my face - "Ahhh" - just the thought of safe, decent, sanitary housing, as well as quality. "My, oh my."

But soon, the thoughts and the ideas that were set in my mind would be exploded. In Boston, Mass., I found a reality where quality housing is being carried out and managed by the most delightful residents of the Bromley-Heath Tenant Management Corporation, which is the nation's oldest tenant management organization.

A Visit to Bromley-Heath

Bromley Heath is located in the up and coming Jamaica Plain neighborhood. There are supermarkets and other services nearby as well as transportation.

As we finally approached the public housing development, my eyes widened with amazement. I asked, "This is public housing?" To my surprise, these high-rise buildings were well maintained and clean; no loitering, no broken windows, no garbage, the smell was of a community that had pride in itself and it showed well.

As we entered the tenant management corporation office, we were greeted with very delightful welcomes.

At the time, Mildred Hailey, the executive director of the Bromley Heath Tenant Management Corporation, and David Worrell, community services coordinator, were meeting with officials from the local office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as well as the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) and contractors that are involved in the constant up-keep and redevelopment of their community.

We were invited to sit in on their meeting and I was very pleased to see residents in a formal position negotiating the use of their developments and having a major effect



One of the playgrounds that serve Bromley-Heath children.

Photo by John Brooks

on the community in which they live. After the meeting, we sat and talked about their housing community, their programs, the effect resident management has on the community as a whole and the support from the local and federal governments. Very impressive!

Mildred Hailey

I asked Mildred her feelings on resident management and what did they do to get it and what it took to train a new generation of resident managers. Her response was, "Respect you earn and power you take,"

"You keep bringing people on but if you start infighting, you'll never get there." And I totally agree with Mildred.

She went on to say how they started by getting a victory after organizing around a police brutality case. Afterwards, they received a health center and then they proceeded to get involved in political campaigns.

Mildred recalled that when they took over Bromley-Heath, there was garbage everywhere, 4,000 broken windows, leaky roofs and not enough money to completely manage the buildings to bring back the full capacity of quality housing. But it didn't dampen their spirits at all. They had residents that were determined and knew that the first thing they needed to do was to hold on and stay focused on their goal to turn their community around. The residents knew that "just getting a little bit of money for one contract for one thing was not resident management," Mildred said.

Mildred said that resident managers have demolished 70 units. They started with 1,244 units and now have 983 units. A number of units were combined to accommodate residents with larger families.

"With the problem of crime and small areas, we felt that

"When you come to Bromley-Heath, you always get a meal. Actually, you get two - food for thought and food for your stomach." - Bromley-Heath resident and Tenant Management employee Cheryl Patterson

this would help families in feeling safe and having more spacious room to live in.

"By providing this type of housing that the larger families required without being pushed out into another community that would and could cause harm to their children, Bromley Heath resident management has made it possible for our people to have quality housing that is decent and safe."

"We do not consider ourselves a project, but a development, a community."

Bromley Heath is all low-income buildings and Mildred said, "I look at getting mixed-income from within."

I said to Mildred: "There has always been a mixture of incomes in public housing."

As we spoke on the stigma on public housing residents and their level of incomes, Mildred and I agreed that "mixed income means that anyone who has not lived in public housing, their presence here is going to upgrade us."

Mildred said she has always felt living in public housing "does not indicate a flaw in a person's character. It just means that someone is economically deprived."

I also talked about the mixed income here in Chicago, in which Lake Parc Place is involved:

"It is good," I said. "There is no difference in the people, only their income level, which is not unusual when you think about it. Each person has a responsibility to their community and dwelling area and it is truly up to residents to be involved to move forward and build or to stay in the dark and not move at all."

"Information is not getting to all residents and ignorance becomes a bliss when residents are not informed of the changes that will affect the living conditions where they live."

Mildred commented, "We as tenant leaders have a responsibility to educate residents. Many doors have been opened on lots of issues and people have not taken advantage of it."

Mildred talked about the scant resources resident leaders have compared with the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) and the Conference of Large Public Housing Authorities (CLPHA). "They have a staff and budget. What do we have? We have volunteers and we can't continue to be only volunteers."



Workers tend the grounds around one of the development's 7-story buildings.

Photo by John Brooks

Mildred said Bromley-Heath has a newsletter and radio station but the radio station is not functioning right now. "It's always going to be that core group of committed people that keep coming back," she said.

Oh how well do I know the feeling and the fight, I thought to myself as she spoke about commitment of residents. It is a tragedy when laws are written that put the poor people in more darkness and environmentally unstable, deplorable housing or none at all.

Mildred spoke about the One Strike Policy and how it affected residents with a drug problem. She asked, "Wouldn't it be more humane to get them in a program, than to throw them out on to the street, to a homeless shelter and eventually, right back to where they started?"

I said that "The law is not written by poor people but we pay the price for the mistakes on how they are written."

When Mildred had the meetings on One Strike and rent rising, she said there was standing room only. But for routine meetings, there are often only a few people. Mildred said, "People will only come out for their own interests. We always say at the Tenant Management Corporation that 'Numbers are not what move us.'

"There's always a handful that keep people's feet to the fire and political leaders only represent a portion of the population."

Mildred also said she thought Resident Management Corporations in Chicago were on the right track but is disappointed that Irene Johnson is no longer at the LeClaire Courts Resident Management Corporation.

As we continued to talk and explore more of the issues of residents and their roles in public housing, I spoke about residents being educated in the field of management, Mildred said she did not feel resident managers need degrees to ensure their success:

"You can't let them put you down because you don't have the degree. It depends on the individual. Sometimes the degrees mess them up and we get a lot of Harvard MBAs (Master of Business Administration) and sometimes I will turn them down in favor of someone with experience and compassion and you can see their potential, the TMC (Tenant Management Corporation) can help them learn what they need to know."

Mildred gave an example of one of her assistants, Cheryl Patterson. Mildred started working with Cheryl when she was 14 years old and has worked to train her.

In some positions, Mildred said she needs professionals, such as architects or their chief of police.

But they have an on-site drug treatment service which is run by residents. "With this, you can hire more residents without degrees. A way of locking residents out of jobs is not having a degree," Mildred said.

A Tour

Bromley-Heath has a program that is named The ROSE (Resources Opportunity Support Empowerment). ROSE is a 14-week program that teaches self sufficiency, resume writing, welfare to work, CPR certification and day care certification. ROSE participants are required to work 2 hours each week as volunteers. There are four ROSE centers in the Boston Housing Authority.

Mildred invited myself, Residents' Journal Editor Ethan Michaeli and John (Continued on Next Page)

of Bromley Heath

(Continued from Previous Page) Brooks, our gifted photographer, to a graduation. There were eight graduates present and two were unable to attend because they were already working.

Mildred said, "The hall where the graduation was held has been used for weddings, repasts after funerals and many more community events."

She smiled, saying: "If only these walls could talk."

Cheryl Patterson, also a resident and Mildred's assistant, commented on the meal being served at the ROSE event: "When you come to Bromley-Heath, you always get a meal. Actually, you get two - food for thought and food for your stomach."

Another amazing resident of Bromley-Heath is David Worrell. He is the Community Service Director of Bromley-Heath Resident Management Corporation.

David gave us some history on Bromley-Heath as he took us on a tour of the development. The Bromley side was built in 1941. It consisted of seven-story buildings. The Heath side was built in 1954 and six-story buildings were built. In 1964, a seven-story senior citizens building was built. The entire development comprises 1,216 units. But it will be decreased to 750 units. Street-level entrances will be created for most units.

Mildred said that in units for disabled persons, there are low light switches and closets with low bars so people who use wheel chairs can hang their clothes. There is a ramp from the laundry room and a low stove so people with disabilities can cook for themselves and wash their own clothes.

Even the peep holes are situated lower so people with disabilities can look out the front door. "We had good architects but we are residents and we know what other residents need to live," Mildred said.

David Worrell said they use their experience to improve the new designs. "We are bringing back the green space. We have our own police force. We have upgraded the plumbing and wiring. Also it was sometimes difficult to get money for new programs or needs from the Boston Housing Authority: they think we're doing so good we don't need anything. We still need to do more to maintain and keep the buildings.

"At one point, Bromley-Heath was one of the worst developments in the city, but look at us now."

David went on to explain that the Boston Housing Authority had historically discriminated against people of color by not allowing them into public housing and reserving developments in white neighborhoods for whites, reserving housing in Black neighborhoods for Blacks, etc.

A recent court order requires all applicants to go into a central waiting list, from where successful candidates get the next available vacancy, no matter which neighborhood the empty apartment is in.

There are priorities for victims of domestic violence, homeless people and those who are moved that are deemed matters of public safety.

And last but not least, there is a priority for a person who wants to move into a development that historically only has white or Black.

David said, "We want tenants to have power to screen residents but all of the Boston Housing Authority is under a court order to do a centralized application process with a random vacant apartment selection process.

"Most of the key positions are residents and that's good because residents tend to have higher standards."



A father and son stroll through the Bromley-Heath grounds.

The Bromley-Heath TMC budget is \$8 million per year, almost all of it from HUD and some monies from state funds and non-profits.

David said the Bromley-Heath TMC ultimately wants to manage other developments as a private property manager: "It's almost necessary that we eventually have to manage other developments."

As we toured the development, I saw that the housing is beautiful and very well maintained. As we entered into the buildings, we saw 3-bedroom, 2-bedroom and 1-bedroom apartments, to say nothing about the 5-bedroom apartments. Beverly Hills, you have nothing on Bromley-Heath.

The apartments were equipped with intercoms, had spacious living areas and also included laundry facilities as well as, would you believe, a dining room? Oh yes!

David said the rehabilitation of these units cost \$100,000 per unit. \$10 million will be spent for 35 units in three buildings. Two buildings with 48 units in them were demolished.

"We didn't change the shape of the buildings," David said. "We gutted the interiors and redid the interiors with the upgrade of plumbing and wiring and a comprehensive extermination program in the buildings."

The five-bedroom apartment that we toured was a triplex with a basement. I have never seen this before in public housing and it is definitely not in Chicago.

I was amazed how the residents had thought out and designed the use of the dwelling units; it is amazing and very well thought out.

David Worrell said that Bromley-Heath has a waiting list that could run up to 20 years for the new units but relo-



A young resident of Bromley-Heath poses.

cates get first priority, then people with medical problems and then people who are under or over housed. The BHA matches occupancy right away.

A History of Bromley-Heath

David talked about how there were other successful resident-managed developments: Kennilworth-Parkside in Washington, D.C., Cochran Gardens in St. Louis and one place in New Jersey.

He also said Bromley-Heath had to initiate a lot of the services they have and said it was just a natural progression to tenant management.

At the time Bromley-Heath became tenant managed, the federal government - with Jack Kemp as HUD Secretary under President George Bush - was promoting tenant management. Bromley-Heath residents sought to make partnerships with the Boston Housing Authority and the federal government.

"We knew it would not work if we were adversaries. We had to have some sort of cooperative relationship," David said.

David noted that the keys are to "organize, communicate, educate and negotiate." I, as a resident representative, agree with the whole concept of cooperative relationships.

David went back in time and talked about the human chain that residents formed in the '60s because kids were being killed by drivers speeding through the neighborhood.

He said, "Most people get organized around common issues. The thing about tenant management is that most of the employees live in the development."

Bromley-Heath has a 13-person board and all of the members live in the development.

David talked about the role of the Bromley-Heath police force: "It's not just having the police here to enforce the law. It's residents policing residents. If you put on a gun and badge, you're going to react after the fact. We don't have the same gang problems of Chicago. We try to work with residents so they take action before the fact."

David also said, "If you are in this kind of job, you



A kitchen in one of the refurbished Bromley-Heath apartments.

Photo by John Brooks

have to understand that it's much more than 9 to 5. Part of the mission of tenant management is to make people comfortable. Once you instill that pride in self as individuals, it is possible to believe you can do anything.

"The residents know that we are not a cure for all but know that we're a good place to start to get something done."

Mildred said, "We don't work in an adversarial relationship with the housing authority. We work as partners."

Mildred noted that Bromley-Heath is a 10 percent limited partner with the developer of a near by mini-mall, which has the Stop and Shop supermarket. She said the original plan for the mini-mall site was to put a garbage dump and a car junkyard on the site.

Cheryl Patterson said that Bromley-Heath usually dominates both the precinct and ward.

Patterson said out of Bromley Heath's staff of 65, 50 percent are former and current residents.

"It's about getting residents to understand their dreams can be realized."

The community also has a modern health center. Mildred said, "It was seven years in the making but it was worth the wait. You can do things but every community has to go at its own pace."

Mildred also suggested that I get a contract from the Chicago Housing Authority to manage units.

I said before I get a contract, I want to make sure I am capable of doing everything I need to do and whatever the contract will be will include a partnership or no partnership at all. I am going to equip myself with all the knowledge there is to know before I ask for a contract.

Mildred said, "We really need to come together in unity, all the resident groups. There is a greater voice in numbers. When something new comes from the government, we have to decide: Is this to our benefit or is it an effort to get out of the public housing business?"

Conclusions

When we are fighting amongst ourselves for a lack of knowledge of the law and civil rights, who benefits from it? We don't. Without knowledge, it is not for us to benefit but to implement what has already been decided for us.

When you are not armed with the knowledge that will protect you, ammunition to grow is of no difference. You are like a frog on a lily pad. You are sitting in the middle of the pond, wide open and unprotected. Without knowledge, you cannot implement something that affects the housing community you live in or your whole being as a human.

The tour of Bromley-Heath is a lesson within itself. I have come and I have seen what quality housing is without the discrimination that comes from other people that live within the same community. I have some suggestions based on what I have seen and from the love and sincerity I felt: To my fellow neighbors of Boston, Mass., Bromley-Heath Tenant Management Corporation: I bow to you for you have accomplished what so many are seeking. There is a lesson all public housing authorities can learn from you.

To Chicago Housing Authority and HUD: There is a model awaiting you. Take it and use it wisely. To the residents of the Chicago Housing Authority: Where there is a will, there's a way. Respect one another. Know what you have to deal with and take care of business.

Farewell, Mr. Chairman

As chairman of Chicago Housing Authority, Edwin Eisendrath headed the 1995 federal takeover.

Eisendrath stepped down in November to pursue a career in the education field but RJ Reporter Anita Baker caught up with him in his new office and reflected on the past three years.

RJ: What was your role as CHA chairman?

EE: "I hired CHA's executive director, who is Joseph Shuldiner, a choice I am very glad I made."

"The responsibilities that were mine suddenly became Mr. Shuldiner's and he is now doing all of the heavy lifting. The board has to approve a number of things: policies of the agency, budgets, contracts, etc. In this case, I was the board. Everything was unanimous. In order to do this you have to listen to lots of people. You can't just say 'Gee, I'm on your own. I get to make whatever decision I want.' Then you're guaranteed to fail. You have to spend lots of time listening to residents and community leaders. Instead reach out for whatever the best opinion about how to do things."

"In reality, as long as the federal government was taking over, it was slightly different than a normal chairman. A



Former CHA Chairman Edwin Eisendrath gets some help from daughter Emma.

normal chairman has a full board and you have to make sure that everybody on the board knows what's going on and gets information they need to make very important policy decisions for the agency. What direction should it go about things like mixing the elderly with the disabled. How should you implement One Strike You're Out. What do you do about the issues raised on the viability test. These are very important questions. It's the board's responsibility to pick a direction for the agency and to make sure that it goes in that direction and does it in a way physically, legally and properly. Ultimately, you know that the chairman is supposed to take the lead."

RJ: Why did you want to take over the Chicago Housing Authority?

EE: "I wanted to do something for the Authority. It mat-

tered a great deal to me. I pushed very hard to get then-Secretary Henry Cisneros to agree to step up and give more money in Chicago and he did. They were very upset about the idea in Washington."

"I wanted to make sure that Chicago Housing Authority was run very well. It has taken unbelievable steps to get there in the last few years. Starting with the audit and financial matters. A clean audit that tells the public where the Chicago Housing Authority spends its money. This is a remarkable thing. The idea that a government could exist in the United States and not be able to tell taxpayers and residents where the money went is unbelievable and unacceptable. Now, residents living in the Chicago Housing Authority, and for that matter anybody in the United States, can pick up the audit and read it and know where the money is spent, know where they're getting the money. This was very important. We took control over lots of things: a clean audit, procurement. There was criminal fraud with the pension fund, which people stole money from. Control is very important."

RJ: What was your most important achievement?

EE: "The most important thing in my tenure were the residents of public housing. They are my whole life."

Completely ignored by Chicago, they were a second city within a city. They were a forgotten people in a forgotten neighborhood. And now residents are standing up and requiring to be included in things. I say beginning, because it will probably take 15 or more years of work. There is a beginning of an end to this notion that if you live in public housing you are a second-class citizen. Everybody in Chicago will be a citizen of Chicago together. This is more important to me."

"The buildings were in terrible (Continued on Page 7)

The Next CHA Chairman?

by Andre Robinson

The Chicago Housing Authority has been without a chairman since Nov. 1, 1997, when then-Chairman Edwin Eisendrath stepped down from his post to take on a different venture.

Because CHA has been controlled by the federal government since 1995, President Bill Clinton will make the final decision on who will get the job. Andrew Cuomo, the secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, will likely make a recommendation to the president.

But local politicians also will have a strong voice in who becomes the new chairman. U.S. Rep. Danny Davis (D-7), U.S. Rep. Bobby Rush (D-1), U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. (D-2) and U.S. Sen. Carol Moseley-Braun (D-IL) strongly endorsed former Mayor Eugene Sawyer. Sawyer now works for Crown Energy, an oil brokerage that had business dealings with CHA. Sawyer also is co-chairman of Rush's voter registration drive in memory of Mayor Harold Washington, whom Sawyer succeeded as mayor. Sawyer reportedly was pleased with the endorsements but had to remove his name from the possible candidates.

Davis' chief of staff, Ira Cohen, was asked if the congressman had another choice. Cohen said, "Rep.

Davis has other candidates in mind but will not decide until further investigation."

There were similar responses from congressmen Rush and Jackson's offices. Davis' district covers areas that are inhabited by CHA family developments (Rockwell Gardens, Henry Horner Homes, ALBA Homes, Harrison Courts, Hilliard Homes and Ickes Homes) and a dozen senior hous-

ing units. Davis currently is not considered a candidate for the position permanently but will hold the position until a person is chosen.

Usually a position like that would require someone with a background in public housing or ties with HUD but I believe (are you listening President Clinton and Secretary Cuomo?) that this person should possess people skills along with a keen business mind and

prevailed not only among the executive brass but also with directors, managers and administrative assistants.

For the new chairman, I have a message: You will need to come tough with the residents but also be honest. It's better to get on our bad side with the truth than their good side with a lie because you may not be liked but you will be respected.

There will be people from all over the country applying for this position from smaller housing authorities to former CEOs of big businesses. The applicants might also include people who probably have never been in Chicago before in their lives and don't know the history of Vince Lane, Renault

Robinson or Charles Swibel, all former CHA chairmen who could not succeed in changing the face of public housing in Chicago.

Just recently, for the first time in years too numerous to count, a professional accounting firm confirmed that the CHA's books were in order. This will make the new chairman's job somewhat easier. But that's only about 10 percent of what you'll have to worry about because there are huge headaches lurking in the corridors of CHA housing.

As political as Chicago is, let's hope that the decision to appoint a new housing chairman is not made to gain votes.

For the new chairman, I have a message: You will need to come tough with the residents but also be honest.

ing buildings. Rush's district has Stateway Gardens, Robert Taylor Homes, Ida B. Wells and Washington Park. Carol Moseley-Braun, who also has not yet decided on a replacement for Sawyer, sits on the Senate committee that has jurisdiction over housing programs. Mayor Richard M. Daley will have strong input in deciding on a new chairman for CHA but has yet to decide on a possible candidate.

According to CHA's public affairs department, the new interim chairperson for CHA is Karen A. Newton, who is from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offices in Washington, D.C. She

possibly - though I know this will be hard to do - very limited political connections. Because running CHA means access to large contracts and real estate deals, we do not need some who would soon arrange for an old buddy to pick up a \$5 million contract for their construction company or someone who would take some CHA land and sell it to a real estate company. So I strongly suggest alderman, congressmen, and former mayors need not to apply. Not to take anything away from Eisendrath: I felt he did a great job with what he had to work with. But others have always seen the CHA as a place to make a quick buck. This sentiment has

Lathrop Homes News

by Bobby Watkins

As a resident of Lathrop Homes and also representative for the Lathrop Advisory Council, we would like to thank our community on the way the everyone came out to support the family of Local Advisory Council President Juanita Stevenson during the time of their bereavement. A special thanks to the staff at CHA Preventive Programs and our own Lathrop Tenant Patrol. A special thanks also to the executive offices of CHA and the Central Advisory Council staff and Local Advisory Council presidents but even more so to our alderman, Billy

Ocasio. It was a great honor for you to help the Stevenson family in their time of sorrow, especially your dedication of the honorary street name to Ms. Audrey Stevenson. But as residents, we wish you could be more visible for some of the needs of this community to show that you are as much a part of the Lathrop community as you are to the rest of your ward areas. We would very much appreciate if you would come out for some of our community meetings but thanks for showing us compassion in a time of sorrow.

Also a special thanks to Rev. Liala Buekema of the Church of Good News.



Ald. Billy Ocasio (26, from left), Lathrop Homes Local Advisory Council President Juanita Stephenson and CHA Executive Director Joseph Shuldiner dedicate an honorary street name to Stephenson's daughter, who was murdered in November 1997. Police are still seeking suspects in the crime.

Photo by James Rayfield



The young people of Lathrop Homes came out to the street dedication in honor of Audrey Stephenson. Ms. Stephenson was active in the Tenant Patrol and other community activities

Photo by James Rayfield

(Continued from Page 6) Taking the worst of our buildings and tearing them down and replacing them with housing like Henry Horner. The Authority has hired a good staff. They have begun reintegrating public housing families in civil life. They have begun to transform physically and through helping residents find employment. The Authority has done a lot in such a short time.

RJ: Do you have any regrets or wishes that you could have done more?

EE: "You always want to get more done than you can in a day but everything takes longer. Personally, I would have focused more on the little kids. Lots has been done. We did a lot of creative, talented things. Helping young men and women go beyond to find employment. I maybe should have focused a little harder on the quality of early childhood in our community. I wished that I could have done more for early childhood. I'm not naïve about the real obstacle to progress. I know there are setbacks that you have to overcome. There will continue to be setbacks that will have to be overcome going forward. It's important to keep the perimeter strong enough so that when you have an incident - like what's happening in Cabrini lately - but you can get through and get back on track."

"Is it realistic to think that Chicago in my lifetime will be an absolute shuffled deck? Integrated communities with everybody living next to each other: rich, poor, white, Black and Hispanic. It is very important that we reach across any line that is drawn. About where we live and work and respect each other and gain from each other. That's what is beginning to happen as much as the physical changes. It's beginning in house with the Chicago Housing Authority, where the Authority says to the residents, 'We have mint redevelopment opportunities. Come here and tell us how you think this should happen. You hire a planner. We have business opportunities here. You should step up to the plate and take advantage of them. We have journalism opportuni-

ties. Step up and participate.' This is how it begins. "Could we have done more at Cabrini? I suppose the answer is yes. But to do more at Cabrini means on a given day to do less somewhere else. There's so much that has to happen to pull the Authority up. I respect very much Mr. Shuldiner's sense that it's not going to be the emergencies that determine the direction the ship sails. That we have a place to go and we're going to get there. When things happen, you deal with it. You don't let it pull you off track and just focus on what will be a big show."

"Policing issues are among the most difficult. Not only in the Authority. Look at the difficulty the city is having. It's not just Chicago. In every city and nation in history, policing issues are immensely difficult because they have to do

"The most important thing in my tenure were the residents of public housing. They were a forgotten people in a forgotten neighborhood. And now residents are standing up and requiring to be included in things."

- Edwin Eisendrath

with the limits you set forcibly, by the government. Which is what police do. They are an arm of the government. They forcibly stop people from crime and protect citizens from people. It's a very tough thing to do. Combine it with the immense racial disparity, crime and arrest patterns that you see and you get something that will be explosive.

"The chief I think continues to do a sensitive job as can be done to make sure that the police that we have are deployed reasonably and that we get the most protection we can for a rapidly diminishing amount of money. Police leave because they're needed elsewhere. The police budget has been cut and will continue to go down. All of that is part of when the day comes when all of our residents are protected like every

other resident in the city by the city police force. With this minimum, extras help but even for this to happen we must make sure that our residents aren't causing the crimes. If we let people in our buildings, who is going to be the problem? There's nothing anyone can do. The Authority's management has a lot to do with how safe the property is. Not just the police.

"We agree that tenant patrol has a very big responsibility. And there has been a push to make tenant patrol more useful. But not all of the developments have tenant patrol.

"There are changes that take longer. Mr. Ed Moses and Joe Smith sort of revamped the tenant patrol. It's more fair across the board.

RJ: What projects do you want to continue?

EE: "I want to see the residents of the Chicago Housing Authority treated like and feel like the residents of the rest of the city. Some of that is swimming up against the media and TV. There are so many good people who live in public housing. So many of the buildings and the developments are perfectly fine and they really are as good as stuff on the private market. They're not luxurious housing. They are decent places for people to live. That's important for our residents to know and the general public to know. Places that I'm not saying that people stop complaining about. On the contrary, it's the residents demanding that they continue to be made better. So that's one."

"The Chicago Housing Authority is continuing work on all of the major redevelopment that is going on. We have to continue to work and make the buildings safer, help people find assets to employment, help pay attention to our children who live there. We have to continue to secure our buildings with reduced money for police. I think that the residents and employees of the Chicago Housing Authority are really committed to make it happen. This too I hope will continue."

by Mary C. Johns

Since there was very little coverage of the Million Woman March that took place on October 25, 1997, in Philadelphia, PA, I thought it would be a good idea to write about what I saw and heard there.

The Journey

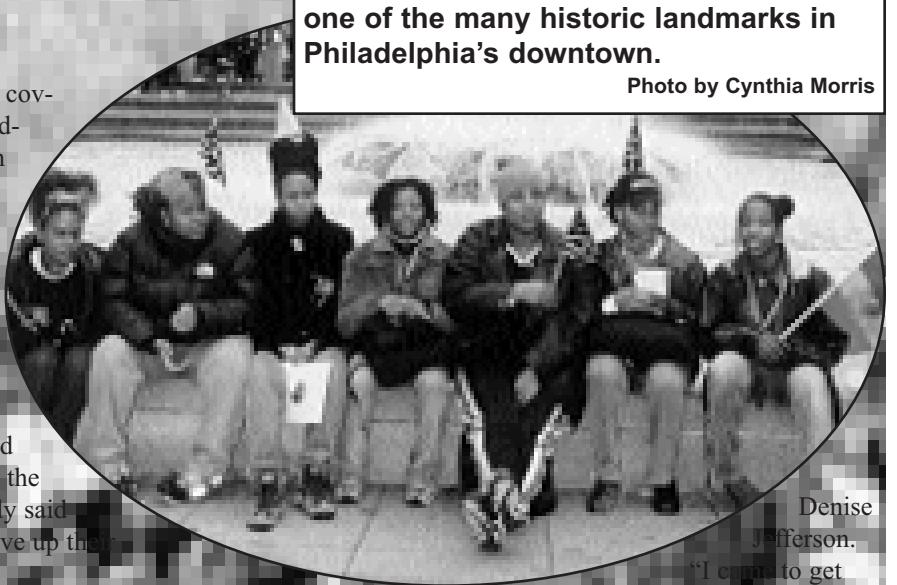
Quite a few of CHA's women employees were going to the Million Woman March. I accompanied them on the bus that they had chartered. During the long 15 hour ride, some of the women discussed a few of the issues that were to be covered at the march, while others either slept or watched videos in between stops. We were given T-shirts made by Cabri Green Textile Works to commemorate the occasion. One of the ladies even read a poem to help inspire us. We finally arrived in Philadelphia at 9:30 p.m. Friday.

observed the happenings.

The Speeches

Twelve issues were to be covered at the march, including human rights, health facilities, support for U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.), homelessness, housing, and senior citizens programs. There were quite a few people who spoke at the march including actress Jada Pinkett, who was also the mistress of ceremonies, activist and writer Sistah Souljah, who had the women rolling when she bluntly said that Black women shouldn't give up their sex organs so readily to men.

There were also speakers of the Black Muslim faith. For one instance, I thought I was at a Nation of Islam recruitment rally; there were a lot of women in Muslim attire handing out literature. One of the speakers talked about her Muslim beliefs



Denise Jefferson.

"I came to get together with the sisters of the nation for peace and harmony." Michelle May and Barbara Miller, both from Washington D.C., had this to say, "I'm here for sisterhood and unity," said May. "I'm here for together-

The Million Woman March: One Woman's

History in the Making

Left home around 4 a.m. Saturday morning to the sound of a ringing phone. It was the trip coordinator calling to let me know when I should check out of the hotel. I couldn't get back to sleep so I turned on the television to watch the news. The weather man said that it was raining but would subside later in the day.

Alive broadcast from Penn's Landing showed a quiet few women already there waiting for the march to begin. Despite the rain, the women were determined to march and be heard. I checked out of the hotel, boarded the bus and headed for Penn's Landing, where the majority of buses were parked. We then took a street bus to Benjamin Franklin Parkway, where the march was to take place.

The March

We arrived at Benjamin Franklin Parkway around 10 a.m. Saturday. Women were everywhere marching and chanting and holding banners. Vendors and hustlers were also there seeing who they could get to buy their goods. We missed the beginning of the march but more women with their children were constantly coming into the park, marching, chanting and waving their banners. On my way to the podium where the speakers and media were, I spoke to quite a few of the ladies, took pictures and



The crowd at the Million Woman March was both enthusiastic and fun-loving.
Photo by Cynthia Morris

so much that some of the women in the crowd shouted "All praises to Allah."

Ava Muhammad, a Nation of Islam attorney, responded with anger to an article criticizing the Million Woman March from USA Today syndicated columnist Julianne Malveaux. In the article which appeared the day before the March, Malveaux expressed concerns about the Nation of Islam's role in the march and that there might be a hidden agenda. Malveaux said that the money it took to finance the March could have gone toward helping some of the issues that were addressed. Malveaux wrote that it was a waste of time and resources to go to Philadelphia to march for issues that plague our communities as well as the problems that African American women face daily because the problems would still exist after the March and need more of a commitment than just a one day affair.

The article obviously upset Ava Muhammad, who said that Malveaux "sold her soul for a job." Muhammad suggested that the women should make a list of all "traitors to the cause." Activist Ramona Africa, Louis Farrakhan's wife Khadija Farrakhan, actor Blair Underwood and Dick Gregory spoke as well.

Between speeches, artists sang. Murdered Rapper Biggie Smalls' wife, Faith Evans, sang, "His ye is on the sparrow." A special salute was made in honor of Rosa Parks. I didn't get a chance to hear South African activist Winnie Mandela speak because we had to leave. Before I left, I tried to interview some of the speakers but was told by a Nation of Islam guard that I couldn't approach the podium, let alone be allowed on it, unless I had a VIP press pass.

The Marchers Speak

Ihave to admit that I felt the same way about the March that the columnist Malveaux did. But being the objective reporter that I am, I wanted to hear from the marchers themselves why they thought it necessary to come to Philadelphia. "If we can get this many sistahs together in one place, then something greater can come out of this event," said Sarah Plowden from Brooklyn N.Y. "It's a once in a lifetime event," said Philadelphia

Actress Jada Pinkett energizes the crowd with her speech.



Photo by Cynthia Morris

"I came to bring unity to all sistahs," said Syreeta Cunningham from Staten Island, N.Y. "And jobs to everyone!"

"I came because I want to do something positive and get the message to take back with me for the sistahs that didn't come," said Marvine Baskin from New Haven, Conn.

Food For Thought

Imust say though, that it was good to see women, and so many of them, together for once getting along without any fighting, cursing and arguing. There were no reported incidents that day, except for a few children who became separated from their mothers during the event. Ladies, why can't that be so every day?



Marchers cheer and salute.

Photo by Mary C. Johns

In this continuing series of stories on the subject of access for the disabled residents of CHA, I have learned some interesting facts: the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has been law for more than seven years but lack of compliance to its rules and regulations remains a significant factor. Federally funded housing such as that provided by CHA has been rather slow in implementing access measures and it is very difficult to determine who or what specific entity may be blamed for these infractions.

Eckhart Park News

As a resident of a senior citizens housing development, I am very pleased to congratulate the private management organization, Hispanic Housing Development Corporation, who came on board in the early spring 1997 to manage the two buildings of our Eckhart Park development, for an excellent job of handling a difficult situation which had existed for years under the previous CHA management.

One glaring ADA infraction was the missing ramps in the parking area between the two buildings at 847 N. Greenview, where I reside, and 838 N. Noble Ave., and this was covered in our first anniversary fall issue. Shortly after publication of that edition, the missing ramps were constructed and Hispanic Housing has been involved in other notable improvements with more pending.

At the first annual Christmas party in the Greenview building on Friday, December 19, certain individuals received recognition awards for their contributions to establishing cooperation between management and residents. Mary Burns, activities coordinator for the Erie Health Center, was recognized because a drop-in Center remains in the Greenview Development even though the health center moved out of the development several months ago.

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WEEK	TOPIC	DATE
1	Understanding Phases of Grief	Jan 27
2	Exploring the Impact of Loss	Feb 3
3	Sharing Memories of the Relationship	Feb 10
4	Coping with Loneliness	Feb 17
5	Handling Anniversaries and Holidays	Feb 24
6	Dealing with Role Changes	Mar 3
7	Effects on Beliefs and Practices	Mar 10
8	Moving On	Mar 17

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Access Report

by Thomas Merriweather

Under the capable direction of Manager Marian Stewart, the Hispanic Housing Development staff consists of Assistant Manager Ada Torres, Elderly Services Coordinator Stacey D. Mullins, Administrative Assistant Velveata M. Hearon, Leasing Clerk Marilyn Lopez, Engineer Alex Bruno, Assistant Engineer Ricky Ward, maintenance workers James T. Davis-Green and Paul Ramon, and janitors Anthony Smith, DeJuan Martin and Mark Grandberry. With the recent increase in staff, this private management company is able to provide better and more sensitive services to the predominantly senior population of this CHA development.

Access Living

During my summer 1997 interview with Lawrence Gorski, director of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, I was advised that there were no exceptions to the ADA requirements. I have learned during my preparations for this story that there are some exceptions, including church buildings not involved in a government-funded operation such as a day care program, church-operated subsidized housing programs and certain other activities.

On Dec. 18, I interviewed Stephanie Kester, Karen Tamely and other staff members of Access Living. They discussed some rules and regulations involving ADA. We discussed the fact that NBC television in Chicago (WMAQ-TV Channel 5) at its broadcasting facility at 454 N. Columbus Drive has a studio on the second floor which is not accessible to individuals who use a wheelchair and others with mobility difficulties. This fact came to my attention when our development was contacted recently by the Jenny Jones Show and our residents were invited to become members of the studio audience. One resident who can only walk with the aid of a walker had to be

Inspector General Nabs Employees

by Julio Martinez

Once again, CHA Inspector General Leonard Odom is working on a case involving CHA employees. He says what he is trying to do is correct the mistakes of the past. "With the takeover of the Chicago Housing Authority came new employees, such as Mr. Shuldiner [CHA executive director] and Mr. Eisendrath [former CHA chairman] and many other persons who established new rules of operation. A new system was initiated to update the registration of CHA property so that it is now easier to protect and retrieve property in case of theft. For example, take the case of some plumbing supplies that were stolen from CHA warehouses, transferred to sites unknown to us and eventually sold as scrap metal. During our investigation, these materials were recovered through the use of our new identification system. This system was established by our Finance Division. Thanks also go to our residents who brought forth information that was used to recover the materials.

"You may remember when four CHA employees were caught with a truck full of supplies stolen from our warehouses. A CHA employee informed us that this truck was en route to a hardware store. We arrested these corrupt employees in the act of unloading the truck along with the owner of the True Value hardware store, located at 3414 W. 63rd Street. We recovered paint, sinks, smoke detectors, plumbing tools and much more worth in total about \$200,000.

"We want to send a message to CHA employees that the old CHA is gone and that they should keep in mind that if they steal, they will be prosecuted to the

fullest extent of the law.

"Recently, we had a case where an employee of our Private Management division was seeking a bribe of \$100.00 from a CHA resident. My office set up a trap for the dishonest employee where we gave the resident the money and when the CHA employee accepted the bribe, we arrested him and terminated him on the spot, although the case is still pending in court.

"Some of our employees are very tricky. Every weekend employees from my office go to the Maxwell Street Flea Market to see if we can identify CHA materials being sold and occasionally we find some. CHA materials have certain unmistakable markings which makes it easy for us to prove in court that the material are ours.

"During one investigation, we found three rooms full of materials worth over \$50,000 that had disappeared from our inventory. Actually, these types of cases are rare. However, there are still people that are willing to commit these acts. In those cases, we also investigate whether any supervisors or managers were aware of the crime and whether they reported it. We are always seeking the cooperation of supervisors since it is part of their job to report theft."

Odom also says that "Of all the cases that we have had since October 31, 1996, we have concluded 107 investigations and 48 are still pending. We have recovered nearly \$40 Million in property that may have been lost forever due to theft."

"I want to make sure that the residents have our Investigations Hotline number so that they can report any illegal acts being committed by CHA employees: 1 - 800 - 544 - 7139."

CHA to Buy Back Laundry Tokens

by Alan Minerbrook

In early December, I participated in the celebration of the installment of the late Major Robert Lawrence Jr. (a cousin) into the Astronaut Hall of Fame at the Kennedy Space Center in Orlando, Fla.

When I returned Dec. 8, I had a bag full of happy memories and dirty, sandy clothes. I needed to wash. But when I went into the laundry room one floor below my apartment, I saw some brand new machines. I was happy to see the new machines. Many tenants had long been disgusted with the old machines because they were in terrible condition when they worked at all.

But then I noticed a sign which said "insert card here." I didn't have a card; I and everyone in the building had been using tokens in the old machines. With no card, I had to drag my dirty laundry back to my apartment.

I started to investigate. I called Shirley Hammond, the president of the Senior North Local Advisory Council, and was told by her secretary to call back the following week. Approximately one week later, I made it to Hammond's office and paid \$7.50 (\$6 for the machines and \$1.50 deposit) for the new card which I could use to access the new washers and dryers. I was told that the laundry service would come every other week to Flannery to add money to the cards.

I must say that the situation was a little confusing. I was also worried about what I would do with the left-over tokens that I still had. After talking over

this situation with the other residents who work on *RJ*, I found out that there were problems with the laundry machines in every CHA senior development. Many residents were especially mad about the leftover tokens. The tokens were purchased through CHA Management through a rent deduction of \$5 per pack. Many residents told me they felt ripped off because the tokens were useless and no provisions had been made to reimburse the tenants.

On Jan. 5, I contacted Angela Ryan from CHA's Public Affairs Department regarding the laundry

Many residents told me they felt ripped off because the tokens were useless and no provisions had been made to reimburse the tenants.

tokens. Ryan assured me that CHA would provide refunds for unused tokens. The refunds will be handled through the building management office and credit for the returned tokens will be credited back to the tenant's account.

The laundry service situation is still not quite resolved for all CHA seniors, though. Ron Carter, CHA's director of economic development, said the problems were caused by an effort to let resident-owned businesses take over the laundry service. Carter said that laundry machines are set up in 93 CHA senior citizen buildings.

Late last year, 21 different residents won a competition to take over the laundry service. The resident business owners partnered with one of two firms -

Macke Laundry Service or Mac-Gray Laundry Service. These contractors both supply Ratheon Speed Queen commercial washers and dryers.

In Flannery on Dec. 8, the day I came back from my trip, the resident business owners started moving out the old equipment and installing the new machines. But in some other developments, Carter said that the old machines were moved out but new machines were not allowed in. In other developments, the managers did not allow the old machines to be pulled out. Carter said this situation was caused by

problems with finalizing the leases for the new laundry services. In some places where there was no laundry service, the CHA Senior Programs staff used buses to take seniors to laundromats.

At press time, Carter said every CHA senior development except for one now has laundry machines they can use. In some developments, residents are using the old machines with old tokens and in others, they are using the new machines with the new cards. This is a problem because the old machines needed a quarter for a wash or a dry but the new machines require 75 cents. Carter said all machines will eventually charge 75 cents for either a wash or a dry. "That's the market value," he said. Carter said the new laundry service will generate 300 jobs for public housing residents. Residents employed by the resident laundry services will work as attendants, maintenance workers and business operators.

"Sometimes when you try to do good, there are glitches," Carter said.

"But when it all comes out in the wash, residents will get new equipment, cleaner, better laundry and people will get jobs."

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There has been a lawsuit filed in Los Angeles contesting the constitutionality of the One Strike clause. President Bill Clinton signed the Housing Opportunities Extension Act March 28, 1996. It mandated that all federally-subsidized housing enforce a zero tolerance on criminal activity. This means that there does not have to be a conviction in order to start the proceedings for eviction. It also means that public housing authorities now must enforce tougher screening criteria that will ensure that new move-ins to public housing have no criminal background.

All public housing residents are subject to the "One Strike and You're Out" clause that is part of all new leases. Residents who continue to occupy public housing as well as new move-ins are all required to abide by the new ruling.

In Los Angeles, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a lawsuit on Nov. 21, 1997, on behalf of three residents of Holiday Venice Properties, a 256-unit, HUD-subsidized complex in Venice, Calif. The residents - all women and current leaseholders - received an addendum to the lease that they refused to sign. The addendum included One Strike provisions.

According to Los Angeles ACLU attorney Rocio Cordoba, Alliance Housing Management, the agent that manages the complex, sent the three women a memo on September 25, 1997, threatening eviction if the new lease was not signed. Phyllis Des Verney, a tenant at Holiday Venice for six years, has a 13-year-old daughter also on her lease; Pamela Anderson, a tenant for 20 years, has a 6-year-old granddaughter living with her; and Bonnie Holmes, a tenant for eight years, has a 10-

L.A. Tenants Challenge One-Strike

by Wateka Kleinpeter

year-old daughter that lives with her; they responded to the notice via ACLU attorneys.

On Nov. 3, Alliance sent another memo to the trio threatening to file for eviction Dec. 1 if the agreement was not signed and returned to their management office.

There have always been provisions in the public housing lease that held residents responsible for the actions of their family members as well as their guests. The stipulation has been that if the criminal activity occurred on CHA property or within a certain area near the property, residents could be evicted.

Cordoba said the three women objected to the part in the lease that holds the leaseholder responsible and subject to eviction if a member of their household or their guests commit a crime within three blocks of the property in which they live. The women support drug-crime free housing but object to being held responsi-

ble for people not in their household who are not under their control.

Anderson works as a counselor with teenagers at a neighborhood community center. Des Verney is a long-time community activist. She is a former building manager of Holiday Venice. The three women are the only three residents who did not sign the lease addendum.

In a recent telephone interview, Cordoba said there have been some new developments in the case since the lawsuit. The management company has sent the three women a letter stating that they will no longer be required to sign the addendum.

The ACLU legal staff is in the process of deciding the next step. Since Alliance Housing

Management no longer requires the three women to sign the agreement, a decision has to be made what, if any, further legal action needs to be done.

The residential lease agreement that is now used by CHA has a One Strike clause. Section 7(m) describes the One Strike criminal activity that can result in lease termination. A conviction is not needed and it only takes one single incident to start the eviction process. Residents of CHA have no rights for a grievance hearing for criminal activity.



Honoring Harold Washington

Chicagoans celebrated the life of late Mayor Harold Washington (1922-1987) on the tenth anniversary of his death. Photo at top shows the Chicago Public Schools Gravesite Program at Oakwood Cemetery Nov. 25. Photo at left shows Chicago Schools Chief Paul Vallas with Mayor Richard M. Daley under Washington's portrait at the annual prayer breakfast Nov. 22.

Photos by Mary C. Johns

Dr. Wax
AD



Korean

Russian

ABLA Relocation Report

by Karen Owens

With help from ABLA's Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) committee, an agreement to guarantee that residents from Brooks Homes would be able to return after rehabilitation was completed. They secured funding from the CHA modernization heat-related damage fund to renovate one high rise for Brooks Homes residents.

During the rehabilitation process, some residents were even hired to work. Here's an update to what's happening:

Recently here at ABLA Homes (Addams, Brooks, Loomis, and Abbot), Brooks Homes underwent a massive rehabilitation process. 835 old units were completely renovated at a cost of \$4.5 million to erase the deplorable living conditions - no heat, leaking roofs and crumbling plaster. You may ask, "Where did the people go who were involved in phase I?" Some residents took Section 8 certificates, others decided to remain here at ABLA. For those that remained, a committee was formed called the MOA. The committee consisted of Brooks residents, Local Advisory Council (LAC) executive board and CHA staff. They were able to have renovated one high-rise unit within Abbott at 1440 W. 13th St. to temporarily house the residents involved in phase I.

Your next question might be: "Why couldn't they just fix one unit at a time?" According to Deverra Beverly, president of the LAC, this question was presented by the residents to the MOA committee and the CHA staff but the old units had serious problems. Walls were still crumbling, roofs still leaked and bad underground heating in Brooks

caused the rebirth of the high-rise.

It took approximately four months to complete the rehabilitation process, which began in July 1997. Residents were housed in clean and safe units.

Resident Interviews

I interviewed two residents who collectively have lived in the Brooks Homes 53 years.

Audrey Davis, a resident for 9 years: When asked how did she like her new unit, she replied, "It's nice, no roach or mice infestation or mosquitoes. I'm looking forward to returning."

"Plenty of heat, hot water and excellent maintenance staff. But I'll be glad to go home." - ABLA Relocatee Beatrice Jones

Beatrice Jones, a resident for 43 years, said: "I don't like high-rise living."

When asked why she didn't like high-rise living, Jones said that residents were not allowed to sit around the building during the summer months because there were no benches and that the laundry room still hadn't opened.

She said, "I'm pleased. Plenty of heat, hot water and excellent maintenance staff, and Ms. Purdis, the manager, works very hard to make sure the residents' needs are met. But I'll be glad to go home."

Resident Leader Explains

I then asked LAC President Beverly how she felt about the rehabilitation process.

"We have three residents hired as of Dec. 28, 1997 as consultants (the contract was given to the LAC) to sit in on all meetings with CHA, the Walsh Construction Company, which is handling the rehabilitation,

and the sub-contractor to make sure everything goes as planned."

Beverly also said that the rehabilitation was "a first" and felt confident that residents in good standing (no social problems and rent kept current) would return. She also voiced this concern with the consultant Thom Finnerty and the CHA staff.

Beverly then used a quote from Ed Moses, CHA Deputy Executive Director for Community Relations and Involvement, which goes, "Don't trust us, judge us."

"So I'm happy and excited," Beverly said.

CHA Questions

Last but not least, I presented some questions to Doreathea Washington, CHA's deputy director of security and modernization. They are as follows:

RJ: What will the rent be?

DW: "Rents will remain the same as for all public housing residents. 25% of income if on fixed income, ceiling if employed."

RJ: When will the rehabbed units be ready in the Brooks Homes?

DW: "The first, phase I, 132 units will be ready by January 1998."

RJ: How many residents will return?

DW: "13 units were torn down to make way for secured parking during phase I and the new units will be based on configuration - the ability to accommodate family size."

RJ: Will employment be one of the requirements to return?

DW: "No pre-condition based on employment."

RJ: Will utilities have to be paid?

DW: "Electricity."

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THE APPLICATION DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 13, 1998.

by Benjamin Harris

There is an old saying: 'Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day; But teach him how to fish and he will eat for a lifetime.' This old philosophy is the foundation of the Resident Employment Development Initiative (REDI) program.

What is the REDI program? In 1995, REDI was created to empower residents to become economically self-sufficient.

In the past, Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) residents had to rely upon government social programs, low-paying jobs, part-time jobs and broken promises to make it any way they could. The social, political and economic inequalities were strong barriers to residents achieving economic success. If a resident wanted to acquire a decent-paying job, the resident might have had to travel out to the suburbs; and, after obtaining the job, the resident was often treated like an underclass citizen. Chicago's political climate and the financial institutions' lending policies made it difficult for residents to become self-employed.

Only recently has the political and financial atmosphere improved to the point where residents can receive

"I still have some apprehension because some promises were made and not kept; however, this is one of the best opportunities for us residents that have come along and opened some economic doors to us."

- Lafayette Williams, owner of LLL Car Wash and Storage Inc.

At present, more than 90 new businesses have been formed as a direct result of the REDI program.

Employment and Training

Managed by Clark Roberts, the Employment and Training Department hosts two two-week sessions to help residents find work. Residents are prepared through career opportunity seminars and referrals from CHA. Participants also are given the job REDI-ness workshops, which cover how to find, get and keep a job. They are given self-assessment exercises to help them understand how their values, attitudes and past accomplishments

time because of the obstacles I have tried to overcome in establishing my service at the Ida B. Wells homes. These frustrations and obstacles have caused disillusion and some anger in me toward the REDI program. I feel that this is a good program but a lot of problems have to be solved first. I had nearly given up starting the business until I was given the opportunity to locate my business within the incubator center. I still have some apprehension because some promises were made and not kept; however, I am not a quitter, and this is one of the best opportunities for us residents that have come along and opened some economic doors to us."

ROBO Chamber of Commerce

The next step in the development of the REDI program is the development and the formation of the Resident Owned Business Organization Chamber of Commerce. The purpose of the ROBO Chamber of Commerce is to provide a comprehensive resource for resident-owned businesses. By having their combined strengths focused, the Resident Owned Businesses will be able to compete and succeed in this business world. Phil Fairweather said that the fundamental principle of

REDI: A New Beginning?

some political and financial assistance in becoming self-sufficient and self-employed.

Ron Carter, executive director of CHA's Economic Development Division, is captain of the REDI ship. Carter has said many times that "the only way to elevate the economic hardships of the CHA residents is by providing them with their own education tools and financial resources that will enable them to become self-sufficient."

Using the vast resources of CHA for resident empowerment, REDI comprises several major components, each of which is designed to assist the residents in their particular needs.

Resident-Owned Businesses

There is another old saying: "Mother may have, father may have but God bless the child that's got his own."

Philip Fairweather, manager of Resident Enterprises, runs a rigorous 24-week entrepreneurial program designed to make residents into successful entrepreneurs. The course includes the mechanics of establishing a business, completing a business plan and ways to navigate tax laws. Participants also learn how to identify the competition, how to develop production and marketing plans, accounting practices and comprehensive business plan development. There's also free technical assistance from attorneys and accountants.

Pride is only one of the benefits that the residents receive from graduating from this program. In Resident Enterprises' first year, over \$5 million in contracts had been executed with resident-owned businesses and their joint-venture partners. As of the date of this printing, over \$42 million has been contracted to resident-owned businesses and their joint-venture partners.

William Moore, CEO of Moore Security Inc. and a graduate of the resident-owned business training program, said, "I am grateful of the opportunity that was provided to me by the REDI program. I could not have started my security company without the help of this program."

"I hope and pray that every resident who lives in CHA take advantage of these opportunities."

Another graduate of this program is Claude Walker, owner of Sir Walker Pest Control. Walker said, "I have waited over 18 years for an opportunity like this. In the past, a little guy like myself had no chance in hell to acquire any sufficient business contracts from CHA. However, since this new management team has come aboard and initiated these new opportunities, I can see the light at the end of the tunnel for success."

"In April of 1998, I look forward to my first contract with CHA that only the big companies could get in the past."

relate to their goals and growth potential.

The department also provides referrals for child care, transportation, mentoring and follow-up that will ensure the participants' success.

Roberts said he has seen many smiles of participants who have completed the workshops: "They come out of the program with more confidence and with a much more realistic view of themselves and the skills they need to be successful."

The Family Investment Center

The Charles A. Hayes Family Investment Center will be the hub of the CHA's career preparation, job training and entrepreneur development programs. CHA's resident employment development initiative and the family self-sufficiency program will have operations at the Family Investment Center. The CHA Community Development Credit Union also will be housed there. A 50-station computer laboratory, complete with Internet capabilities, will connect residents and staff to technology learning centers throughout the CHA as well as the Illinois Department of Human Services and other databases and electronic networks. Along with offices, the center will hold a 500-seat auditorium, classrooms, medical clinic, child care facilities, television and recording studios.

"I feel honored to have this great opportunity of bringing back the Charles Hayes Center to the Bronzeville community. The site of the center has very historic significance," said Zenobia Johnson-Black, executive director of the Hayes Center.

"The Hayes Family Investment Center embodies CHA's commitment to positive social change."

Business Incubator

In addition to the Hayes Center and the technology learning centers, REDI also is establishing a business incubator. The business incubator center is located at 1150 E. 89th St. The incubator will provide resident-owned businesses with commercial business development space without the high cost of overhead.

Lafayette Williams, owner of LLL Car Wash and Storage Inc., struggled for over a year to establish his car wash and storage service at the Ida B. Wells complex. He eventually gave up on locating the car wash at Wells and now has found a home at the incubator center.

"I had been frustrated for a very long

time because of the obstacles I have tried to overcome in establishing my service at the Ida B. Wells homes. These frustrations and obstacles have caused disillusion and some anger in me toward the REDI program. I feel that this is a good program but a lot of problems have to be solved first. I had nearly given up starting the business until I was given the opportunity to locate my business within the incubator center. I still have some apprehension because some promises were made and not kept; however, I am not a quitter, and this is one of the best opportunities for us residents that have come along and opened some economic doors to us."

Some Words of Caution

Not all testimonials are success stories. Some residents who worked for resident-owned businesses complained that they were not paid for the work they did.

A. Washington said, "I worked for one of those resident-owned businesses and when it was time to get paid, I didn't get paid; what I got was some excuses and a lot of B.S. I was told to file a grievance but you know how far that will go. I received a call from CHA and after listening to that jerk, I hung up the phone; and I hope that I never hear from them again."

Conclusions

As a resident-owned business myself, I know how frustrating it can be in this business world. I know that when a new program is initiated, there will be some bugs that must be worked out of the program. I have had to withstand the frustration, disappointment and outright extortion in the development of my business. I have had to deal with setbacks, broken promises and downright lies. I have had to deal with ferocious competitors every day; and don't exclude the Internal Revenue Service.

Nevertheless, I use all of these negatives to build a strong business character. In addition, I analyze these negatives very closely so that I can avoid them in the future. I know of no business that has succeeded without overcoming these negatives and using them to their advantages.

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MAGICAL MOMENTS KIDS CLUB

Ages 3 to 12

Cabrini-Green: Changes and Relocation

by Cecelia A. Clark

Each morning when they awake, the families remaining in 500 and 502 W. Oak St., two nineteen story high-rises in the Cabrini Green Public Housing Development, find themselves hanging in an uncertain balance between relocation and homelessness.

While some families have been relocated to other apartments in the development and others offered Section 8 Certificates, the remaining families - after numerous meetings with numerous people - are still unclear on what their fate will be.

One resident at 500 W. Oak St. who wants to remain anonymous had this to say:

"500 and 502 are included in the It's Time For A Change Resident Management Organization.



Jenner Elementary School

Photo by Cecelia A. Clark

Residents believed that after we started the resident management process that the buildings would be protected from being closed and demolished.

"But the truth is that you are never out from being under CHA. The first step in the resident management process is the last.

"According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the buildings have to be offered to residents first before demolition."

Carrie Williams, a long time resident of 502 W. Oak St., said, "The residents have to move in January 1998. CHA is offering to place residents in other buildings in Cabrini and some will get Section 8 Certificates but none have received any written notification from the Authority about the building closings or being relocated.

"We got the information at a meeting at the Lower North Center. We were also told about some

'scattered site housing.' Why is it that we have to move in the winter time?"

CHA announced plans to close 500 and 502 W. Oak in late November after an outbreak of random gunfire that posed a safety threat to the Jenner Elementary School across the street. On Oct. 13, 1992, 7-year-old Dantrrell Davis was hit by gunfire as he tried to cross the street from 502 W. Oak to Jenner School.

Marshall Ann Williams, another long time resident of 502 W. Oak St., attended a meeting at Jenner School where Paul Vallas, chief executive officer of the Chicago Board of Education, along with employees of the Chicago Housing Authority decided to keep Jenner Elementary School open and close 500 and 502 W. Oak St. The meeting was prompted by an incident where shots fired from the buildings disrupted classes, threatening the safety of students.

Many residents of 500 and 502 W. Oak St. feel that their Local Advisory Council representatives are not helping the residents.

Williams said, "The residents don't even know their rights and no one is trying to help us at this time."

But as always, there are two sides to every story. The fear and anxiety of the residents of 500 and 502 W. Oak St. were experienced by the residents of 1150 and 1160 N. Sedgwick two years ago.

Police determined that the bullet which killed Dantrrell Davis came from the building at 1157-1159 N. Cleveland and the residents were soon moved out. Many of them were relocated to 1150-1160 N. Sedgwick St. Later, residents of 1150-1160 N. Sedgwick were relocated to other apartments in the development and housing complexes in the surrounding area.

Many of the residents relocated from 1150 and

Residents' Journal will continue to examine the issue of relocation. We ask anyone who has been relocated to call Cecelia A. Clark at (312)674-4218. We want to know whether it was a good or bad experience for you. We do not have to use your name.

1160 N. Sedgwick St. today are pleased with what resulted for their families from the buildings being closed.

A resident relocated to the Southeast Side of Chicago said that she loves her new apartment and is happy to be there. Betty Minor, a resident relocated from 1157 N. Cleveland to 1150 N. Sedgwick, has now relocated to another state. I had an opportunity to speak with her while she was in the development visiting relatives. I asked Betty if she was satisfied with the move.

Betty said, "I am happy with my new place. It's nice."

I asked Betty if she ever thinks about coming back to Chicago. She said, "No, but I miss my family and friends who still live here."

I am sure that there are residents that have not fared well as a result of being relocated due to the closing of buildings in Cabrini. But after listening to some of the residents who have left Cabrini and seeing how well they are doing, the beauty of it all makes me wonder if I am even doing the best thing for my family by trying to stay here, like many of the families in 1150-1160 N. Sedgwick did then and the families in 500 and 502 W. Oak St. are now. When all you know is all you know, how do you know what better can be?

Jenner Elementary School

Located at 1009 N. Cleveland, Jenner Elementary School serves over 500 students.

Chicago Public Schools CEO Paul



Sunset at 500-502 W. Oak St.

Photo by Cecelia A. Clark

Vallas, in a Nov. 19, 1997, press release, expressed concerns for students' safety after numerous incidents of gunfire near the school. At one point, Vallas announced plans to relocate students to Mulligan School, 1900 N. Sheffield Ave. But those plans were reversed when the Chicago Housing Authority decided to close 500 and 502 W. Oak St. Students will remain at Jenner since various agencies, community organizations and a coalition of area churches and ministers plan to establish parent patrols, provide anti-violence initiatives, a homework center and to expand the youth programs. They also plan to establish a 24-hour crisis hotline.

The alliance, in conjunction with Jenner's Parent Patrol and Cabrini-Green's Tenant Patrol, is joining forces to help monitor Cabrini-Green during and after school hours. This plan is designed to make Jenner a safe zone for the children.

Within the next two years, Jenner will be vacated and a new facility will be built as a part of the Chicago Public School's aggressive capital improvement program. The Chicago School Board is scheduled to begin breaking ground for the new school in the spring. The location site for the new school will be near its current location.

Closing Remarks

America embraces other countries throughout the world with aid to feed the needy, to protect other countries under siege by uncivilized attacks around the world. So why the inhuman attack on the low- and very-low income residents of public housing? Something is very wrong with this picture. Might I suggest that the next time before President Clinton, Congress and the Senate send aid to other countries, the rapid changes in laws should always take care of Home Base first. Take nothing for granted because public housing residents are American citizens and we also vote.



A good idea posted outside 939 N. Hudson Ave.

Photo by Cecelia A. Clark

by Alan Minerbrook

As soon as the last issue of *RJ* came off the press, Flannery had another change of managers. David Kane was removed Sept. 26 and the new Flannery Manager is Donna Jones. She began management duties Oct. 1, 1997.

Marie Colon continues as assistant manager. The maintenance department is headed by maintenance superintendent Larry Calvin; Janitor A is Selwyn Stanicine and Janitor C is Vincent Moore.

Jones introduced herself to building residents at a leaseholders meeting Oct. 1. She discussed continuing building problems. Residents said the elevators in both buildings are consistent problems. On many days, both elevators in one or the other building have been down. Jones said tenants should report elevator problems to the management office immediately.

At the meeting, Jones said new leases were being typed for processing. The leases will be renewed every 14 months from the anniversary of the tenant's move-in date.

There are many new clauses contained in the new

12:30 p.m. every Thursday for medical assistance. Flu shots are available from the doctor at no charge.

New refrigerators were delivered to all apartments in late October. These new refrigerators accommodate more food and are energy efficient. Many residents at Flannery are pleased with the new refrigerators.

Holiday Festivities

A Halloween Party for Flannery tenants was held Oct. 31 at the 1531 N. Clybourn by Mary Ann Longstreet-Madison, the resident service coordinator Flannery's representative from the city Department on Aging at Flannery Homes. The residents were pleased with the tasty menu, as they are with all of Mary Ann's enthusiastic efforts.

Longstreet held another event for Thanksgiving. The event was held on the top floor at 1531 the day before Thanksgiving. The dinner was splendid, with plenty of turkey dressing, sliced turkey, sweet potatoes, greens, hot rolls, salad and fruit punch.

At the Thanksgiving event, Longstreet-Madison announced that 1st National Bank would sponsor a Christmas door-decorating contest and a party with food,

meetings last year, adding that the building's finances were in order.

Hammond furnished tenants with a cost-balance sheet which showed that the 1507 building was in financial balance. Hammond requested Verneer's resignation but Verneer said that his tenure in office was scheduled to extend through 1998 and pointed out to Hammond that the tenants had no legal means to dismiss him from office before his tenure is up. But the tenants indicated by a show of hands that they wanted Verneer out "NOW."

Hammond said that because Verneer had failed to hold tenants meetings, she would dismiss him.

Verneer said that he had done his job with the exception of holding tenants meetings and asked for another show of hands vote. The show of hands was still negative and Verneer agreed to leave office immediately. It was agreed the other building officers would retain their office until the next council meeting in January.

Ethel Henderson became the acting building president, "Vicky" Hortense Mason, the secretary, said she is too ill to continue as secretary and was replaced by Ann Smith. Jim Francis was nominated as acting co-president

Flannery Homes Update

leases and Jones advised tenants to check them over carefully before signing. Rent payments are due on the 1st through 10th of each month. After the 10th, Jones said a 14-day notice will be served on the tenant and legal fees will be added to the overdue rent.

Jones said the electric discount deduction charge is \$29 per month for studio apartments and \$32 per month for 1 bedroom apartments. Regarding guests, 2-week passes will be issued for tenant's guests only if the leaseholder is ill and he/she needs the guest to help with basic needs. Any guest who wants to be put on a lease permanently requires a birth certificate, proof of income (SSI, etc.) and a security check by CHA.

All guests are required to have a valid picture ID to be admitted to the building by the guard on desk duty. After 10 p.m., the tenant must come down to the lobby and escort the guest upstairs. The guest must be escorted back down to the lobby when they leave.

Jones said she is conducting a survey to find out if tenants' blinds and windows work. The painting cycle for 1997 ended and the next painting cycle began Jan. 1, 1998. Jones also announced that a physician is on duty in apt.# 302 at 1531 N. Clybourn from 8:30 a.m. through

entertainment and a disc jockey on Dec. 11. That party was fun also.

Christmas Turkeys and Hams were donated to all Flannery Residents Friday Dec. 19.

Local Politics

On Friday, Nov. 21, at 2 p.m., a leaseholders meeting was held for the election of building tenant officers. This meeting was called because of a number of tenants' dissatisfaction with Herman Verneer, building president of 1507 N. Clybourn. A petition was signed by 62 residents out of a total of 86 leaseholders at 1507 requesting Verneer's dismissal due to a lack of participation in Local Advisory Council affairs. The petition alleged that Verneer had not held any meetings in 1997.

On Dec. 4, Senior North Local Advisory Council President Shirley Hammond attended a Flannery tenants meeting in response to the petition to dismiss Verneer.

Hammond said all building presidents must hold meetings at least once per month. Verneer said in his defense that he had held only one meeting this year because he holds an outside job. He said he held four

until the next council meeting in January.

A Dec. 9 tenants meeting was attended by building manager Donna Jones, Hammond and her staff and Mildred Reed, a representative of CHA senior programs and the Senior Victims' Assistance Program. Reed stressed that senior residents must support CHA in its efforts to maintain safety and security. Reed was responding to an incident of severe vandalism at 1507 N. Clybourn in the solarium on the 16th floor. No tenants supplied any information about the extensive damage.

CHA Police Commander Frank Tyson addressed the tenants and supplied his direct-line telephone number (674-4164). Tyson emphasized that the caller's name and address will not be recorded as with the Chicago Police Dept.s' 9-1-1 system. Tyson emphasized the importance of trust between the tenants and CHA Police. The tenants have a vested interest in the Flannery buildings and property. Visitors do not. Tyson said he wanted Flannery residents to get more involved in security matters.

Tribute to Tanya Stewart

by the Staff of the Mama Said Program

The focus of the Mama Said program is to empower young mothers with the necessary skills to take control of their lives by performing orientations, assessments, providing short-term counseling, social services referrals, housing advocacy, education referrals, employment and job training referrals, weekly meetings, special events and home visits.

We, the entire staff of the Mama Said program would like to express our gratitude toward the late Tanya Stewart, unit manager of the Mama Said program/Teen Parent Services/Domestic Violence/Quantum/ & Adolescent & Pregnancy Program.

Tanya successfully trained us to meet the objective of the program. More than that, she taught us what sisterhood means because without it, the program would not be successful. She also taught us that it means to be supportive of one another, to be openhearted, open to listen to problems as well as open to/for suggestions.

Tanya Stewart was a provider of words

of wisdom and a dedicated soul sister of and to the Mama Said program.

Just as the old saying goes "Behind every strong man there's a strong woman," we would like to say, "Behind the Mama Said program, there was Tanya Stewart," a sister, advisor, friend and even mother to many.

Tanya Stewart started the legacy of the Mama Said program and we the staff are to make certain that the legacy lives on.

We would like to share the words of encouragement to the Mama Said team from Tanya Stewart before she moved on:

Oh God! I Can't take It!

On your journey to do better, you are going to find obstacles. The obstacles in your path are there to make you stronger. Building a new life is hard work and you

will need muscles. Big strong muscles which you can flex.

On the path to empowerment you are going to be challenged. Challenges make you quick on your feet. They teach you how to bob and weave. Moving into your power is going to make people nervous. They are going to challenge your new ideas, your new approach and the new you that is emerging. Challenges make you think and rethink what you are doing. Thinking strengthens

the mind. The strong mind of a powerful person has nothing to fear when challenged. A strong mind can weave together an answer for the people who challenge it. Get a Life! Is a good place to start.

On your climb to the top, people are going to throw some stones at you. Don't worry about it. You are strong. You can bob, weave and get out of the way. The stones

they throw may be very big and they will come at you from the most unlikely places. At the most inopportune moments. Don't stop climbing! Don't look back! Stay focused! The people who are throwing stones will be so intent on hitting you they may not realize that the stones they are throwing up at you are going to come back down and hit them on the head.

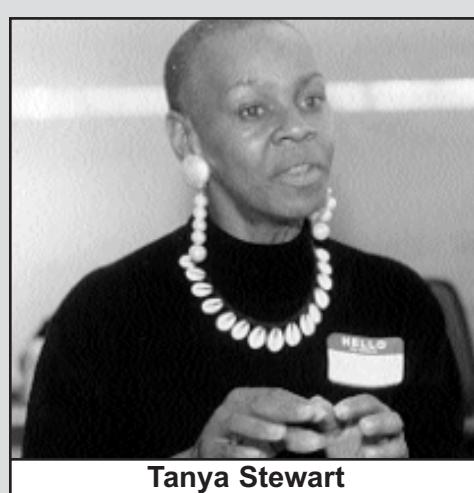
I can take it! I can make it!

Mama Said was founded by Helen Finner and implemented by Tanya Stewart.

Tanya Stewart was born Nov. 4, 1949 and died Jan. 6, 1998.

Ms. Stewart leaves behind 4 children, 2 daughters and 2 sons, three grandchildren and a list of loved ones. She died from breast cancer. She also taught self-examination and also that a woman shouldn't wait around to get a breast examination.

A quote from Tanya Stewart: "The one thing you have is your future. Make the most of everything the system offers to improve your life and the lives of your children. You are a part of both, the little picture, day-to-day existence, and the big picture, how you fit into the larger society in general and the African American community, now and in the future."



Tanya Stewart

CHA Announces First Clean Audit

by Earl Battles

In an Oct. 30, 1997, press release, the Chicago Housing Authority announced that they had received a financial clean bill of health from an outside auditor. This was CHA's first clean financial audit in over 10 years.

Being a resident myself, I wondered how will this clean audit affect me or the other tenants of CHA.

I haven't been a resident for the past 10 years but that wasn't necessary for me to see where CHA was going. I've only been a resident for almost five years and wondered in that short time what was happening to the quality of life in CHA. I've seen serious neglect of CHA buildings, a lack of maintenance services and a decreasing level of social services.

Mind you that I'm not turning this into a complaint about CHA services to the residents. But the fact that there had not been a clean audit for more than 10

years means that CHA didn't track where money or services were going under its previous administrations.

I don't mean to attack Vince Lane, who headed CHA before this current administration. But it makes one wonder: Did slipshod business practices begin or continue during Lane's administration?

The federal government took over the CHA in May 1995 and the agency has made an effort to find where it has been failing. In the press release about the clean audit, previous CHA Chairman Edwin Eisendrath stated, "Now, for the first time, the public knows where the CHA gets and spends its money and can engage in a discussion about how to improve the quality of public housing with real data about the resources available to do the job."

But the press release didn't really answer my question of how this clean audit will help residents. So I interviewed Carmen Browne, acting deputy

executive director of finance and administration.

Browne said the audit explains how money for programs like Hope VI is being spent and how CHA keeps track of where it is going. Browne said the real results of the clean audit will be seen in CHA's redevelopment and relocation activities.

With this successful audit, housing makes the claim that there is progress in improving public housing and that residents are brought back into "the social fabric of surrounding communities," according to the release. This makes me raise several questions: Does housing believe that its poor and disenfranchised residents aren't already part of the surrounding communities? Is not being part of the "social fabric" in some way caused by CHA's misappropriation of funds?

Since 1995, CHA says it has spent \$50 million on redevelopment, including the demolition of 1,190 obsolete

units of public housing, the rehab of 2,178 units and the construction of 455 new units. Browne said another \$25 million for redevelopment recently was allocated by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Andrew Cuomo. CHA says 3,000 CHA residents have made the change from welfare to work, and nearly half of the CHA housing stock is now privately managed.

These sums and efforts may look impressive on paper. But for residents, those dollars are just a tiny portion of what we need to truly redevelop our communities. To really be re-woven into the 'social fabric,' we need more than new buildings. We need effective programs that move residents from welfare to work, including training efforts, child care and counseling. And those programs will cost a lot of money, more money than can be found in a clean audit.

Mr. Odom otra vez lo veo trabajando en un caso que envuelve a un empleado de CHA.

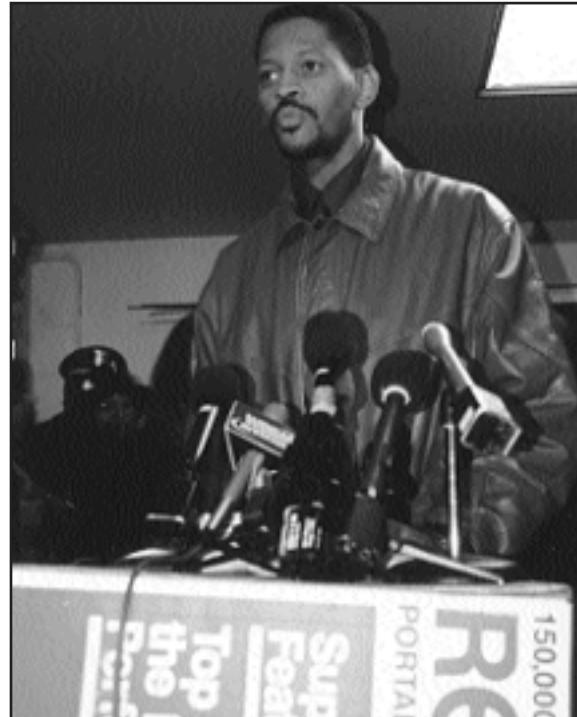
Y el me contesta; "lo que estamos tratando de hacer aqui es corregir lo sucedido en el pasado. Con el cambio que tuvimos en la Autoridad de Vivienda de Chicago, llego nuevo personal como el Sr. Shuldiner, el Sr. Eisendrath y muchas personas mas que establecieron nuevas reglas.

Se establecio un nuevo sistema para mantener al dia los registros de propiedad de la Autoridad de Vivienda, de esta manera es mas facil protegerla o recuperarla en caso de robo. Como por ejemplo, el caso de unos materiales de plomeria que fueron robados de los almacenes de la Autoridad de Vivienda de Chicago y que fueron trasladados a un lugar desconocido por nosotros y vendidos como fierro viejo. Luego de una investigacion se pudieron recuperar gracias al nuevo sistema de identificacion que tenemos. El sistema fue establecido por la Administracion de Finanzas. Gracias a la informacion proporcionada por algunos de nuestros residentes pudimos recuperar los materiales.

No se si ustedes se acuerdan de cuando 4 empleados de la Autoridad de Vivienda de Chicago fueron sorprendidos con un camion cargado de materiales que fueron robados de nuestros almacenes. Un empleado nos informo que el camion lleno de materiales iba camino a una ferreteria, asi que nosotros pudimos seguirlo; cuando lo estaban descargando arrestamos a los malos empleados y al dueño de la ferreteria True Value, localizada en el 3414 W. 63rd St. Recuperamos pinturas, lavamanos, fregaderos, detectores de humo, herramientas de plomeria y muchos materiales mas que se calcularon en \$200,000 dolares.

Queremos decirles a los empleados de la Autoridad de Vivienda de Chicago que el viejo CHA ya no existe,

ENTREVISTA CON EL INSPECTOR GENERAL LEONARD ODOM con Julio Martinez



George Phillips, CHA's assistant director for operations, speaks to reporters during a December press conference. The CHA Inspector General found equipment, including portable heaters such as those on which the microphones stand, valued at hundreds of thousands of dollars in different rooms in the Robert Taylor Homes development. One employee was suspended and the IG investigation continues.

que tengan esto en mente, ya que si roban se les procesara con todo el rigor que permita la ley .

Recientemente tuvimos la queja de un inquilino acerca de que un empleado de la administracion privada le queria estafar con 100 dolares, entonces nosotros preparamos una trampa para el empleado deshonesto, le dimos al inquilino el dinero y cuando el empleado lo acepto lo arrestamos y ahí mismo perdio su empleo ademas de que el caso esta todavia en la corte.

La oficina de Inspeccion General siempre esta alerta durante todo el año. Cada fin de semana vamos al Mercado Maxwell (Flea Market) para ver si identificamos material nuestro y en varias ocasiones lo hemos hecho. Nuestro material tiene ciertas marcas que lo identifican como nuestro, asi que podemos ir a la corte y probar facilmente que ese material es de nuestra propiedad.

Durante otra investigacion descubrimos 3 cuartos llenos de material valorado en mas de 50,000 dolares que habia desaparecido de nuestro inventario .

Estos casos actualmente son raros; pero todavia hay personas que se atrevan a cometer estos actos. Tambien investigamos si los administradores tenian conocimiento de los casos y si los reportaron, siempre buscamos su participacion ademas de que es su responsabilidad el reportar los robos."

Mr. Odom nos dice tambien "de los casos que investigamos desde el 31 de octubre, resolvimos 107 casos y nos quedan 48 por terminar. Aseguramos casi 40 millones en propiedad que estaba en riesgo de perderse o de ser robada. Les voy a dar un numero de emergencia para que nos llamen cuando vean cometer actos en contra de nuestro sistema: 1-800-544-7139."

Altgeld Gardens News

by Sharon Fornizy

A note from me: I hope everyone in all of CHA had Happy Holidays and also if I haven't gotten to you; I'll be around soon.

New Clinic

I would like to tell you about the new Clinic in Altgeld. We had a lovely small program. Gov. Jim Edgar cut the ribbon on Wednesday, Oct. 22, and this is how the program went:

"The Altgeld Health Center is located at 1029 E. 130th St. in the Altgeld Gardens/Murray Homes public housing development on Chicago's far South Side. The mission of the Altgeld Health Clinic builds on the legacy of the Clinic in Altgeld, Inc., founded in 1970. The new clinic will also offer high quality, comprehensive, community-based health care services to the more than 10,000 residents of Altgeld Gardens and the surrounding underserved communities. AHC is the state-of-the art, 22,400 square foot primary health care facility which provides pediatric, adult and specialty medical services, laboratory services, dental services, WIC/nutritional counseling, welfare-to-work training, substance abuse counseling and referrals. The facility will also make available diagnostic facilities (X-ray, mammography) and outpatient surgical procedures by year's end."

A number of people spoke at the Altgeld Health Center Ribbon cutting ceremony: Constance G. Jackson, president and chief executive officer of the Altgeld Health Center, Gloria Jackson Bacon, M.D., M.P.H., founder of the Clinic in Altgeld, Inc., the vice President of Ulysses Food, a representative of Waste Management, Inc., Phillip B. Rooney, capital campaign chair of the Altgeld Health Center and the vice chairman of Service Master, Gov. Edgar and John Lassiter, chair of the Board of Directors at the Altgeld Health Center.

The lovely workers of the Altgeld Health Center work hard and you should see some of the lovely work they do there. I would like to add that the clinic is really lovely.



These are the primary chorus students of Aldridge School Room 101: lescha White (1st row, from left), Mario Hicks, Danielle Head, Bridget McGowen, Deandre Harris, Darryl Mason, Jaqueline McKinnis, Anthony Herron, Carvelle Alexander, Renee Padgett. Teachers Renee Saunders and Juanita Smith look on.

We had the Aldridge School Primary Chorus sing two numbers at the opening of the new clinic.

Well Wishes for Tina Tiggs

Get well soon Tina. We love you. We the parents on the parent patrol are waiting patiently on you to hurry back to your Aldridge family where you belong!

Go Tina! Go Tina! Come back to school. From: The Aldridge upper grade I Love You Tina Tiggs. From: Mrs. Jackson

Condolences

Our deepest sympathy and prayers go out to all of the families in our communities who have lost members of their families, especially the Brownlowe and Wilson families. I and the rest of the community will keep them in our prayers.

GED Classes

To register for your GED, contact Sharon Davis at the Carver Middle School, 801E. 133rd Place,



Chicago, IL 60627. The telephone number is (773) 535-5655

Thanksgiving Thanks

Martha Kindred wanted me to send out the following message:

I'd like to thank first of all Ernie Dunham of Dunham Hair Products for the donation of 250 turkeys to Altgeld during the Thanksgiving holiday. Second, I want to thank all of you who assisted with their distribution. The beautiful ladies who helped out are:

Mrs. Lyles, Ms. Knox, Ms. Waddy, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Jennings, Mrs. McClay, Mrs. Deborah Jackson and the physical education instructor, Mrs. Brown, for allowing us to use the gym.

I'd also like to thank the maintenance crew, Michael and Russell, for bringing the turkey in and the many teachers who allowed us to use their tables. I suppose I could go on but it all turns out to say thanks so much.

CADRE News

The CHA CADRE branch in Altgeld (Combating Alcohol and Drugs through Rehabilitation and Education) wanted me to release the following information:

Prescription: Drugs that can be given only with a doctor's permission are prescription drugs. The doctor writes a prescription that tell what drugs the patient is allowed to use, how much of the drug the patient should take and how often the patient should take it. Penicillin is an example of a prescription drug.

Over the counter: Drugs that can be purchased at a drug store or grocery store without a doctor's prescription are called over the counter. Headache medicines, cold pills, and cough drops are often over-the-counter drugs. Children should never take over-the-counter drugs unless they have been given to them by a parent or other trusted adult.

Schools News

Altgeld Gardens LAC President Esther Wheeler (far left), Dr. Gloria Jackson-Bacon (third from left), Gov. Jim Edgar (center) and Ald. Bill Shaw (9) help celebrate the opening of the new Altgeld Clinic.

I am coming around to all the schools so be ready because here I come: Carver Wheatly, Carver Primary, Carver Middle, Carver High, Our Lady of the Gardens.

Thanks to the Aldridge Elementary School staff, students' family members and contributions from Rosebud Farm and other stores, we were able to give out 20 Christmas baskets to 20 families.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

Now some news from the Parent Teachers Association:

Room 227 from Aldridge School wrote and illustrated stories for the Aldridge pre-school children. Every older child is now a big brother or big sister to the pre-school children.

Other activities will be done through the remainder of the school year. Now for some poetry selections by 7th and 8th grade students at Aldridge Elementary School:

Mama why do you weep?

Baby, I weep because there's not a thing to eat.

Mama why so you cry?



Workers at the new Altgeld Health Center.

I cry because I'm losing my mind.
Mama what do you need?
I need for someone to get me on my feet.

Mama what do you pray?
I pray for God to help of one day.
- by Dasia

Real Man?

A real man, is a peace builder
He is not a fightbuilder,
A real man takes care of his wife
A real does not shoot dice
A real man has a job

A real man doesn't sell drugs and rob.
-by Ydell Ishmon

Night into Day

Spring into fall
Harsh winds blowing in the night.
The glance of an eye.
The ashes of a burning tree.
The sound of shattering glass.
The color of a flower in the making.
Material things of this world will not last.
Don't neglect to remember waves to the big blue.

Round orange above the sky disappearing through day and night with high yellow sky breeze flowing through the ocean.

Relating of species the drop of a leaf nothing in the clear rebuild your burial ground the color of the sky, fall, winter, autumn neglect of mother nature day after day thinking who should you trust the bound of the collapsing against the glance of an eye.
-by Cornelius

I Love Eddie

Eddie, Eddie you're the one for me to open up your heart and let me be.
When I close my eye you're all I see.
I love you Eddie with all my heart.
When I see you I see a bright star.
When you're not with me there's nothing going right.

You're the sun of my morning the moon of my night when I first laid my eye on you I fell in love.

Now let's be together like hand and glove.

Roses are red. Violets are blue
I want you to know my love is true
let's be together each and every day
and our love will grow in a very special way.

The new year started a bit before midnight. The noise was deafening. The gunshots continued until 5 a.m. I heard single shots. I heard sounds that reminded me of cannons. I heard machine gun fire and that type of sound that Uzis make. I heard sounds that I had no idea what weapon, or weapons, made it. The boys in the 'hood, my neighborhood, are well stocked with guns and rifles. The war could go on for a while.

On the South Side, in the Robert Taylor Homes, the bullets started to fly right after the holidays. This time, the parents themselves began to go to the school to pick their children up and escort them home. The Chicago Public Schools hired parents to start escorting kids to school and the CHA Tenant Patrols also are getting involved.

Citizens Review Board

On Jan. 8, I attended a press conference for the announcement of the creation of a Citizens Review Board. CHA Executive Director Joseph Shuldiner supplied the background information and Leroy O'Shield, the CHA Police Chief, introduced the board and told us of its mission and function.

Shuldiner announced the formation of a Citizens Advisory Board to improve the reputation and preserve the integrity of the agency's 400-member police department. The nine-member board will be responsible for reviewing citizen complaints and recommending standards and policies for good policing.

"Any police agency benefits from objective public oversight," Shuldiner said. "This establishes accountability to the public, which is vital if we are to engender the trust and partnership needed for community policing to be successful."

The new board will review all citizen complaints of misconduct or wrongdoing by CHA police and will make recommendations to the CHA Police on the effectiveness of the department's investigation of complaints. In addition, the board's public meetings provide a public forum for citizens to air grievances and concerns about issues related to police conduct.

Board members serve without compensation for staggered terms of one to three years. Members will receive training in CHA Police general orders, policies and regulations, disciplinary and investigative practices as well as standards for resident conduct.

The board's own standards and practices were developed following a lengthy review of all cases adjudicated over the last year alleging police misconduct by residents.

The CHA police has established a confidential hotline number-888-67-CRIME—for citizens to call with complaints or recommendations to the Citizens Review Board. Anyone who calls this hotline can keep their name private.

The board comprises members from a variety of backgrounds to represent the best interest of CHA's 40,000 households. The members and alternates include Al Carter, Al Carter Youth Foundation, Elga Jefferies, Chicago Department of Revenue, Dr.



Illinois Legislators at the Dec. 5 signing of the bill which created the Citizens Review Board of the CHA Police Department: Sen. Donne E. Trotter (D-16) (from left), Senate staffers Thomas Yarrington and David Wilson, Rep. Sonia Silva (D-1), Sen. Maragaret Smith (D-3), Sen. Rickey Hendon, Rep. Shirley Jones (D-6), Rep. Lovana Jones (D-5), Rep. Larry McKeon, Rep. Howard Kenner (D-24) and Gov. Jim Edgar (seated).

Stop The Violence

by Cenabeth Cross

Bernard Hedley, Northwestern University, the Rev. Charles Murray, New Galilee M.B. Church, Mary Powers, Citizens Alert, Charles Reynolds, Local Advisory Council president of Stateway Gardens, Juanita Stevenson, LAC president from Lathrop Homes, Shirley Hammond, president of the Senior Housing North Local Advisory Council, Marie Billingsley, Senior Housing South president and Dr. Carl C. Bell, president and CEO of the Community Mental Health Council, Inc.

Shuldiner started the meeting saying that his deepest concern is fear and crime in the housing complexes. By being involved in their own protection along with the community, Shuldiner said residents have someone to turn to whom they trust. There will be no CHA workers on the board.

"It puts in a non-police facility a resident-friendly environment, on their (the police's) turf, if you will. We're young and we're trying something that will be very helpful. We want our residents to feel safe."

CHA Police Chief O'Shield said, "This is a model for the country. If formed around the country, citizens will feel like there is somewhere they can go. We made sure residents are on the board so there is someone they have confidence in. Then they (the residents) won't have to resort to violence."

O'Shield turned the meeting over to state Sen. Rickey Hendon, who spoke of the late Mrs. Artensa Randolph, the longtime president of the Central Advisory Council, who had been to Springfield trying to get legislators to pass the bill creating the citizens' review board. The bill was signed a week before Randolph's death.

Mrs. Randolph's friend, Henry Horner Homes LAC President Mamie Bone, informed everyone that Mrs. Randolph had been informed that the bill was passed and was thrilled about it.

CHA Police Facts

About the Chicago Housing Authority Police Department:
Community-oriented policing was implemented department-wide in 1997. Mobile patrols were reduced but foot patrols have been substantially increased as have police presence and visibility.

Police officers have permanent assignments to clusters of buildings where they are required to organize the buildings by floors, meet with the tenants and the Local Advisory Councils and collectively identify, prioritize and solve problems involving crime and quality of life issues.

Police officers are supposed to patrol public schools at the beginning and end of the school day.

Officers also are assigned to remove abandoned and derelict

vehicles from CHA properties.

Police officers have received training in domestic violence, violence against women, crime prevention environmental design, service of process and police/community leadership in 1997. Residents, CHA police and security officers have received joint community empowerment training.

The 1995 budget for public safety was \$75.2 million. It included 470 police officers at a cost of \$60.8 million and 270 in house security officers at \$14.4 million. In 1998, the number of police officers is projected to be 380 with 100 security officers with an overall budget of \$40 million - a \$35 million or a 46 percent budget reduction in three years. The contract security budget in 1996 was \$14.3 million. In 1997, it was reduced to \$9.1 million and in 1998 it is projected to be reduced to \$4 million. The overtime expenditures for 1996 were \$4.8 million. In 1997, overtime was \$2.1 million and projected to further reduced in 1998 to \$1.75 million.

The review board could be helpful in cutting out all overtime. The residents could be included in the duties.

This proactive move should raise the bar on conduct and enforcement, increase police oversight and improve community relations.

Crime Victims Aid

There is financial aid for victims of crime. The Crime Victims Bureau is located at 100 W. Randolph St., on the 13th floor.

You are eligible for financial compensation if you are a victim of a violent crime and sustained physical injuries, are a survivor or a victim of a violent crime or if you depended upon the victim for support. You also can receive funds if you are a relative of the victim and incurred reasonable funeral or medical expenses, are a parent of a child who witnessed a violent crime committed against a relative or if you are an Illinois resident who becomes a victim of a violent crime in another state or country that does not have a compensation fund for crime.

To be eligible for the compensation, you must report the crime to the authorities within 72 hours and cooperate fully with law enforcement officers and you must be free of any involvement in the crime.

You must complete an application for compensation and return it to the Illinois Attorney General's Office within a year of the date of injury. The office will then forward a copy to the court of claims at the Secretary of State's office. Forms are also available from the Springfield and regional offices.

Applicants must provide any and all information related to the crime to the Office of the Attorney General. The agency will investigate and verify information in the application and may request applicants to appear for a personal interview.

The final decision will be made by the court of claims.



As funding for the CHA Police force is reduced, more duties may fall on Tenant Patrollers such as this award-winning group from Cabrini-Green. Pictured are Captain Regina Williams (bottom seated), Donna Smith (from left), Michelle Felton, Princella Hubbard and Latasha Gordon.

photo by Cecelia A. Clark



Chinese Page

Letters to the Editor

Advice from the Big Apple

Dear Editor:

I wish to extend our deep appreciation of the story your Journal wrote on this development, on some of the positive things that we have been able to achieve in the past couple of years.

Unfortunately, the success that we've had at this development does not mirror the entire New York City Housing Authority. Nevertheless, we can say quite proudly that crime in most developments has been reduced dramatically. This in part to the city's crackdown on "quality of life crimes" and the authority's enforcement of some of the new regulations over the past 2 years.

I found myself totally appalled at the New York Times article on the Chicago Housing Authority that came out this week. It is only now that I begin to understand how crime has the people by the throat at some of the developments. I hope you might be able to pass on a few suggestions we have been able to implement here.

At our development, we have been successful, for some of the following reasons:

We have a strong Tenant Association, in which we hold monthly meetings to discuss all issues affecting the development. The agenda for the meeting is distributed a week

before the meeting so we specify what is going to be discussed. If a particular apartment's residents are engaged in graffiti or being too noisy, we specify this complaint on the agenda and advise that it is going to be discussed in the meeting. For more serious crimes going on in an apartment, we give a criminal activity form, in which the person reporting the crime does not have to give their names.

With the New York City Housing Authority's Permanent Exclusion Policy, any individual that commits a crime on the authority's property is permanently excluded from the development. This individual's name is listed in the monthly housing newspaper with his name and address, advising all the residents that if they see this individual on authority grounds, to call the police and the individual will be arrested for trespassing. Also, the tenant of record has to sign a stipulation that in case this was a family member, then the tenant's lease will be terminated if the individual is ever found on the development's grounds again.

The Tenant Association has rules of conduct. If these are violated by a tenant and they refuse to change their ways, then weekly a letter will be distributed to every other resident advising about what rules the tenant is breaking and what they can do about it.

We are now installing security cameras in the lobbies of each one of our buildings in this development. We were able to get cameras donated from Chase Bank. These were cameras from banks that have closed and were no longer needed. We then arranged with our cable company (Time Warner Cable) to put the system through the building's cable system. This will enable tenants that have cable to view their lobby at any time they wish for free, since the cable company does not charge for this service. Also, tenants can record all activity in their building on their home VCR.

The last main point is that the tenant association has a list of every legal tenant that lives here. This makes the tenant patrol's job easier knowing who lives and who does not live here legally.

These were just a couple of ideas that I decided to share with your Journal and I hope that you can find some use for them in your fight for dignity and respect for the residents of the Chicago Housing Authority.

Felix Enerito Arias
President
Washington Heights Tenant Association
New York City Housing Authority

Senior Praises Tenant Patrol

Dear Editor:

When I first moved into Senior Public Housing, my feelings were integrated with mixed emotions, as if I had nothing left in life but to await my time to enter the next life. However, my far-fetched mixed emotions, adjacent to the hereafter, have turned out to be impractical for seniors who still exhibit themselves as an important segment of society. Consequently, there's plenty yet to be accomplished in the latter years of life by getting involved in volunteer programs where seniors may utilize their void time most effectively.

Several months ago, I joined the Public Housing Tenant Patrol Program - where 32 plus hours of my time are consumed monthly. Tenant Patrol is a volunteer program for

tenants who are concerned about keeping their facility up to standards: a clean and safe environment, free from harm and risk. As an admirer of the Tenant Patrol concept, I must tip my hat to its board employees, especially to those who beat the pavement in getting various security information to public housing facilities. We tenant patrol volunteers usually meet monthly with select tenant patrol board employees to discuss different options for improvement of safeguard measurements. These usual monthly meetings are extremely good - because all of us are involved in the decision making process.

Finally inasmuch, I have found a dynamic method to fill the void in my life with exciting volunteer work. I urge others in public housing who are concerned about maintaining

their facility as a clean and safe environment, do inquire about coming aboard the tenant patrols. In the proper context, tenant patrol volunteers are the real foundation of the tenant patrol program because their skillful performances and keen observations of their facility will send a strong signal that the security techniques are extensively being performed - and if the techniques are feasible.

In retrospect, tenant patrol volunteers must continue to keep the tenant patrol program alive and well so that it will sufficiently remain funded for the necessary security personnel and good security equipment.

Edward Turner

Disagrees with Article

Dear Editor:

I believe that (Annie R. Smith's report on the Gautreaux Decree in the Fall 1997 edition of Residents' Journal) omitted a crucial point, namely, choice.

Just as Dorothy Gautreaux and her fellow plaintiffs were unwilling to accept that all public housing would be in Black neighborhoods, so they did not insist that all public housing should be in white or integrated neighborhoods either. The idea was that public housing should be in both kinds of neighborhoods, to give people an opportunity to choose the kind of neighborhood in which they wanted to live instead of having that decision made for them by others.

Today, that requirement has become what we all "fifty-fifty," meaning that half of all new public housing is to be located in white or integrated neighborhoods, half in Black. Of course, most public housing is still in Black neighborhoods; it will be a long time before "fifty-fifty" overall is reached. But the fifty-fifty principle is at least moving us in the direction of providing an opportunity to choose.

Your report...makes it clear that you oppose applying the Gautreaux fifty-fifty requirement to units proposed to be built at Darrow. That you are of course free to do but I feel that in fairness your report should have explained the choice reason for the requirement.

There is one further point I would like to make. In the

same issue of Residents' Journal that contains your report (on the Gautreaux Decree), the Rev. Jesse Jackson is quoted as saying:

"What we really want to do is end low-income areas. Isolation and poverty cause the anxiety."

In addition to provide choice, fifty-fifty is one means of helping us all move toward ending low-income areas and the isolation and poverty they generally bring.

I was glad to have the opportunity to talk with you.

Alexander Polikoff
(Editor's note: Mr. Polikoff is the plaintiff's attorney in the Gautreaux Decree)

RJ Salutes Our Subscribers

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Dear Resident

As always, it is my pleasure and privilege to welcome you to each edition of RJ. I would also like to take this opportunity to wish you, your family and our community love, peace and health in the new year. And with these some measure of happiness, success and well-being cannot be far behind. But wishing alone will not make it so. In addition to wishing, we must be working to become emotionally, spiritually, physically and financially fit within our home and community. There are three qualities of physical fitness that we must strive to achieve: **strength** (the quality or condition of being strong), **endurance** (the power to last and to withstand hard wear without giving out) and **flexibility** (the capacity to be bent or twisted easily without breaking; adaptable and able to turn easily from one situation or subject to another). These the same qualities are also necessary to achieve any kind of fitness. As individuals, parents, mates and neighbors we must be strong, we must endure and we must be flexible. We must work to show one another the **love** (As the Bible says, "You must not take vengeance nor have a grudge against your neighbor; you must love him as you love yourself"), **peace** ("If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men.") and **health** ("do not speak thoughtlessly as with the stabs of a sword, but the tongue of the wise ones is a healing") that we wish each other so freely during the holiday season. Remember, all that we wish and work for begins with each and every man, woman and child.

For me, living in public housing (Cabrini-Green), practically all of my life has been a test and a tool upon which to sharpen these qualities. Only the strong survive public housing as it is today and they survive by pulling themselves up and moving out or by staying and not being pulled down into the public housing abyss; being lost to alcoholism, drugs, gangs - total despair. I believe that strength, like failure, is taught. I do not know how to fail. My mother did not teach me how to fail. She taught me how to be strong.

She taught me how to try and try and try again. Knowing that if I had earnestly done my best, while I may not have succeeded, I had not failed because I tried. It is seldom that I feel a sense of failure and always that I feel the strength that my mother taught me. We must help one another to be strong. We must teach our children to be strong. Individually, many of our families have learned to be strong and fared well in public housing but not enough. Too many of our mothers, fathers and children have fallen into the abyss. We must learn to be strong collectively, as a community, if we are to survive as a community. But if this is not possible, you must learn to be strong and teach your children to be strong no matter where you live. Remember, "survival of the fittest" is the rule everywhere.

Living in public housing tries one's endurance, to no end, on a daily basis. From a neighbor's music rocking your world to water dripping through the ceiling, the garbage and pitch black darkness in the stairway, the dogmatic manner in which CHA residents are perceived and treated by CHA and others, drugs, gangs and until recently, CHA's gross lack of maintenance and management. But the most trying aspect of public housing today has become the politics - internal (CAC/LAC/RMC), external (surrounding communities) city, county, state, federal, yours, mine, ours, theirs...everybody's.

Most of this can be attributed to the fact that everything in Chicago is political. One definition of politics should read:

politics: n-Chicago: everything, everybody, everywhere.

And with the move to redevelop public housing in Chicago, the internal politics are fierce as residents agree, disagree, lobby, argue, yell and scream out of fear of things changing or fear of things staying the same. But there is no place for politics within a community fighting for survival. Change is inevitable! You can prolong change but you cannot stop it. You can evolve (grow and change to a more highly organized condition) with change or be pushed aside and left behind by it.

Flexibility, no matter who you are or where you live, is probably the most difficult quality to master because it requires constant change. But flexibility is essential if we are to grow as people and live, work and survive together as a community taking advantage of and creating new opportunities to improve the quality of life for ourselves, our children and our future. When flexibility is achieved, it gives you the ability to stretch and reach in new and far greater directions.

Even more importantly, things that are not flexible are eventually broken; you learn to bend or your learn to break. What it comes down to is this: you are either part of what is right with public housing or you are part of what is wrong with public housing - flex yourself accordingly. There is a great deal that we can accomplish together as a community but we must all flex in the same direction lest we tear ourselves apart.

The picture accompanying this article is of the mural, "PEACE in the 'hood," which for many years was located on the east wall of the Tranquility-Marksman Memorial Organization building, 440 W. Division St. The mural and the building are gone. The need for peace remains, especially for our children.

Until next time ...be strong, endure and **f-l-e-x**.
- Patricia Johnson-Gordon

PS: I'd like to offer a correction. In my last article, I erred with regard to the anniversary of the Million Man March. It was the March's second not first anniversary.



The mural at the now demolished Tranquility-Marksman Building, 440 W. Division St.

Photo by Patricia Johnson-Gordon



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