

R E S I D E N T S ,

Journal

A publication for and by the residents of the Chicago Housing Authority December 1999 /Volume 4/ Number 2

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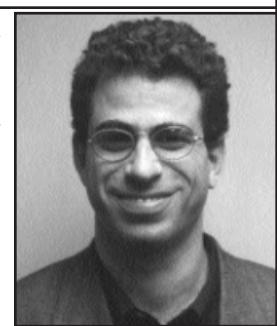
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E d i t o r ' s B o x

by Ethan Michaeli



On the true joys of the urban environment, I'll take the stroll down 47th Street on any day. Every morning, I walk from my office in the Charles A. Hayes Family Investment Center to get breakfast and the newspapers.

It's a morning ritual I try always to maintain wherever I work. My morning walk is a way of connecting with the neighborhood where I work. Too many people spend their days in a cocoon, traveling from suburban home to car to work in an enormous, sterilized office high-rises, with lunches at pre-packaged fast food restaurants. That's not my idea of life in the big city.

From the Hayes Center, I walk north on Wabash Avenue two blocks, past the empty, bombed-out buildings with broken windows, past the vacant lots, past the well-maintained homes with their generous yards, past the churches enclosed by steel gates on the days other than Sunday.

Aside from the rush of young adults making their way to and from DuSable High School in the morning and afternoon, this stretch of Wabash is a quiet street where I can hear the birds and the breeze.

47th Street is another story altogether. Bustling with pedestrians, it's a marketplace and community center that tells the neighborhood's stories and secrets alike. I cut the cor-

ner of 47th Street. The Rosenwald's windows slide up and down as instructions and questions are communicated to those conducting business below while security guards dressed in black, military-style uniforms patrol the entrance.

The Rosenwald's storefronts mirror those on the rest of 47th; shuttered, abandoned and dusty spots alternate with neighborhood stores that sell clothes, music, food stuffs and liquor.

On the way back to the office, I make sure to pay special attention to the children playing at the day care center on the east side of the street. The kids are adorable like all children, whether they're charging up a slide, teasing each other or playing quietly alone.

In short, this little slice of the South Side has all the elements of any strong urban community: businesses, services and residences. Though the community definitely shows signs of the poverty that ravages African American families throughout the nation, I

Celebrating 47th Street

ner through a dirty, vacant lot that serves as an improvised parking lot and open-air auto repair shop. I pass the grimy food store with windows covered by thick gray-black wire mesh and the gas station/convenience store before reaching the corner of South Michigan Avenue. At any time of day and in any kind of weather, people are out hustling wares or services, conducting business and gossiping - all the activities that are the core of any urban area all over the world.

I pass the barbecue joint and Christian book store before reaching my first stop, the Abundance Bakery. The baker/proprietor greets all his customers with a friendly smile of someone who knows his sweet products are nearly irresistible.

A cup of coffee and a bag with a slice of sweet potato pie in my left hand, I dash across the street to the wooden shack that houses the neighborhood news stand. I pick up all three major papers - Tribune, Sun-Times and Defender, and walk across the front of the block-long Rosenwald Apartments building. The Rosenwald is seemingly the center of activity on this

daily discover a new success story along my walk.

And by the way, the anchor families of that community live just west of my walk route, in tall structures that cast both shadow and shade on the neighborhood below.

Many of the Robert Taylor Homes buildings are bricked and boarded up now and others are sure to follow. But the merchants along 47th Street - whether they support demolition or advocate rehabbing the high-rises - confess that they depend on the families that come out of those public housing buildings for much of their business. The baker sees a rush of orders for cakes around graduation time. In the fall, the clothing stores stock up to outfit students headed back to school.

Much has been said recently about the "isolation" of public housing residents from their broader communities. That "isolation" is certainly a fact of life with respect to the Gold Coast or Lincoln Park.

But I don't see much evidence of "isolation" on 47th Street.

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Transforming CHA

CHA Plan Approved: The Beat Goes On

by Mary C. Johns

Privatization of management of all CHA developments has begun.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved the Chicago Housing Authority's \$1.5 billion five-year plan for transformation of its senior and family housing properties during a Feb. 5 press conference.

CHA will no longer manage its properties. As the first step in the plan, all CHA family and senior developments will be placed under private management.

CHA residents have mixed feelings about private firms managing their homes. A review of CHA's past reports, meanwhile, shows little difference between CHA's and private managers' performance.

The Plan

The plan calls for demolition of all 51 of CHA's open-gallery high-rises and replacement or rehab of 25,000 of its current 38,776 public housing units. 13,000 units in high-, mid- and low-rises will be demolished. Of CHA's current 2,922 scattered site units, 2,686 will be rehabilitated. CHA CEO Phillip Jackson said recently no new scat-

tered site housing will be built.

All 58 senior buildings will be rehabilitated.

CHA predicts about 6,000 families will receive Section 8 vouchers and be relocated into the private market during the redevelopment process. CHA officials say only those residents who strictly adhere to their leases will be eligible for Section 8 vouchers.

Comments on Plan's Approval

Mamie Bone, CHA Central Advisory Council (CAC) chairperson and a member of the CHA Board of Commissioners, said there were some areas of the plan that needed work but felt good about it overall.

"We have still some areas that we've got to cover but if I hadn't felt good about the plan going forward and correcting some of the small problems later, I never would have

antees of residents' right to return, Rush stated CHA will still be required to conduct regular inspections and have their policies evaluated by HUD. HUD will still approve CHA rent policies and any new demolitions.

Obstacles

Although the plan was approved, Harold Lucas, HUD assistant secretary of housing, said the \$1.5 billion funding for the 10-year plan was not guaranteed.

"HUD said that we would guarantee the level of funding subject to congressional approval. Every year, we have to submit a budget and the Congress determines the level of funding. So HUD is saying, provided that Congress continues to fund, we will continue to fund CHA," Lucas said.

To see that CHA carries out the plan's agreements, Lucas said HUD provided in the agreement to have a monitor and liaison to work specifically with the city and CHA to make sure that there are no problems. "And we have a field office and a full HUD staff that monitors CHA," he said.

The "Relocation" portion of the plan states, "No building will be demolished until each lease-compliant family has been provided suitable relocation services, including adequate notice of the Authority's intention to close the building."

In other words, "HUD is going to review each year the ability of the market to absorb additional voucher holders. This is going to include a market

been there," she said. Because of on-going talks between the CAC and CHA about the plan, Bone chose not to comment on specific differences.

"Because we're in litigation, we can't talk about that. We're still working in the committees on these plans on some of the things that we're clearing up."

U.S. Rep. Danny K. Davis (D-7) said, "I think the plan is the most far-reaching transformation of public housing policy we have seen since its inception. "That is to say, we have finally admitted that to build concentrated high-rise apartments for large numbers of people to live in close proximity to each other didn't make a lot of good sense." Davis said the new plan guarantees residents in developments that will be demolished have the right to return to the rehabbed or new units.

"This guarantees that people will be involved in the economic development aspect of rebuilding. That there's a goal of 50 percent of the contract for minority and women-owned vendors," Davis said. U.S. Rep. Bobby Rush (D-1) also advocated for changes to the plan. In addition to the inclusion of minority-owned businesses in redevelopment projects and written guar-



CHA Board of Commissioners Chairperson Sharon Gist-Gilliam (from left), Mayor Richard M. Daley, U.S. Reps. Bobby Rush (D-1) and Danny K. Davis (D-7) with U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Andrew Cuomo (seated) during the Feb. 5 press conference about the CHA plan.

assessment on a scale that HUD deems necessary to determine whether the market can absorb Section 8 voucher holders who need to be relocated," said Maria Peralta, a spokesperson for HUD.

"No one is going to be forced to leave the city and CHA will not be able to move ahead on demolishing any developments

will receive more funds to manage the developments compared to what is spent on management today.

"I think that part of the reasons services haven't been rendered has been lack of funding," O'Connell said.

"Through this privatization effort, the CHA residents will realize an increase in funding to each one of the units."

The CHA Board of Commissioners recently awarded \$26 million to 10 private firms to manage all of CHA's senior buildings. The funds for the contracts came from money CHA saved by laying off hundreds of employees.

CHA spokesperson Arcuate said private managers would be better equipped to handle residents' concerns than CHA.

"The property managers will be far more in tune with residents' concerns therefore will be able to deliver a better product. So they will not have to go through the CHA for every property management decision," he said.

As for resident management, CHA Board Chairperson Sharon Gist-Gilliam said all current Resident Management Corporations (RMCs) will continue to manage their developments.

However, those RMCs will be held to the same standards as the other private managers.

"The Resident Management Corporations will be held to exactly the same standards of performance, the same budgetary amounts as every other private manager," Gist-Gilliam said during a January press conference at the Charles A. Hayes Family Investment Center.

The Numbers

CHA feels that privatization will improve residents' living conditions. But in the past, private management firms and RMCs have performed below or equal to CHA in managing developments, according to CHA statistics.

Overall, private management had an average of 18 percent in their vacancy rate, which equals an "F" under HUD guidelines, from Jan. 1, 1998, through June 30, 1998, the latest complete figures available. CHA had an average of 20 percent in their vacancy rate, also an "F," for the same time period. Private management included RMCs in these figures.

(Continued On Page 5)



A Robert Taylor Homes resident moves herself.

Photo by Mary C. Johns

Transforming CHA U.S. Census: Reaching out to CHA Residents

by Jacqueline Thompson

The U.S. Census Bureau is making an all-out effort to make sure Chicago Housing Authority residents take part in the upcoming national count.

Census Bureau officials note that children, seniors, persons with disabilities and other residents lost millions of dollars for government programs because of the 1990 count. In that census, one-half of the children in CHA communities were left out.

The census is required by the U.S. Constitution. The success of the year 2000 Census depends on public participation. Census Bureau officials emphasize the count is residents' chance to tell the federal government they exist and recognize their responsibility to cooperate by being counted.

In 1990, hundreds of communities were under-counted and their areas lost millions of dollars in funding. Many federal and state government programs calcu-

late the amount they spend based on population statistics.

"If your area (jurisdiction) has 100,000 people and only 50,000 are counted, that means you only receive federal funding for 50,000 people," said Beverly Moore, spokesperson for the U.S. Census Bureau.

Moore went on to explain some of the reasons the Bureau received such a poor return of numbers. "One, many persons fear exploitation of personal information," she said.

But Moore emphasized that public housing residents and others need not fear that census information will be misused.

"All information is held in the strictest confidence and cannot be given to your landlord, Public Aid office, neighbors or any other persons or groups," Moore said.

For the 1990 Census, Moore said the Census Bureau supplied the public with publicity, forms and canvassers. But Moore added that some community orga-

nizations complained that the Census Bureau did not do enough.

"There was a hue and cry from the communities that were underreported in their jurisdiction and they went so far as to bring claims against the bureau, citing not enough awareness was put out in the community," she said.

This time, Moore said the bureau has

every person to be aware of their responsibility to participate in the census.

Many citizens that most need the funds for federal and state programs – children, persons with disabilities and seniors – depend on others for inclusion. This is where young adults and middle-aged persons can do the most good, Moore said.

The previous count excluded 50 per-

"All information is held in the strictest confidence and cannot be given to your landlord, Public Aid office, neighbors or any other persons or groups."

- Beverly Moore, spokesperson for the U.S. Census

cent of the children in CHA communities because their parents did not report to the census. Seniors and persons with disabilities who live with their families or depend on their families also went uncounted when their families did not respond to the census.

William Moorehead & Associates, said his firm would bid on the tougher developments.

"We will do an outstanding job. CHA has traditionally given us the majority of the worst that they've got," he said.

Burns said that they have used Resident Owned Businesses (ROBs) to stretch dollars and provide welfare to work programs for residents.

"We have an arsenal of things we can offer residents of family developments," he said.

Burns is confident they can do a better job at managing developments if CHA provides them with enough funds.

"It all depends on the resources we get," he said.

Rhonda Russell, a property supervisor for Diversified Realty Group and former CHA property manager of Robert Taylor A-1, A-2 and Stateway Gardens, said her firm also would bid for management of developments such as Robert Taylor or Stateway Gardens.

"Private management will be a great asset," she said.

"We being of the private sector have more experience and we will do a more efficient job. Substantial private managers will have the ability to hire private contractors."

"We will have a greater access to the funds," said Debra Hunter, president of Diversified Realty.

"And we will make sure the funds are properly allocated in the areas needed."

From 1996-1999, Diversified managed Hilliard Homes, a CHA property consisting of family and senior housing units.

Managing Developments

Since privatization of family developments began in 1996, some private firms have been dismissed and/or had their contracts rejected for renewal.

Robert Taylor Homes and Stateway Gardens are considered some of the toughest CHA developments to manage. *RJ* asked CHA Operations Chief O'Connell what would happen if no firm bid on managing a development like Robert Taylor or Stateway.

"I guess I'll have to cross that bridge when I come to it," he said.

O'Connell added that several firms were already showing an interest in the management of Robert Taylor and Stateway Gardens.

"Right now, the Request for Proposals (RFPs) are out on the street and they (Robert Taylor and Stateway) are part of that Request for Proposal," O'Connell said.

The private firms, meanwhile, think they can handle managing CHA properties if they have enough funding.

Al Burns, senior vice president of



"I think (privatization) is going to be good for the residents because that will stop the saying that we are separate from the other part of Chicago."

- Maner Jean Wiley LAC President of Hilliard Homes, shown here during a Christmas gift giveaway at her development.

(Continued from Page 4)

The private firms received a "D" for their 90 percent emergency work order completion rate while CHA received a "B" for their 98 percent emergency work order completion rate.

Private managers, RMCs and CHA all did poorly on the non-emergency work order completion rate. Both private managers and CHA management received "Ds"; private managers scored 48.27 percent while CHA scored 47.58 percent.

Some of the firms newly selected to manage senior buildings have scored poorly in the past.

For their management of senior buildings at 1633 W. Madison St. and 1611 S. Racine Ave., the Habitat Company scored "Fs" in their vacancy rate. At 1633 W. Madison, Habitat had a 23 percent vacancy rate. At 1611 S. Racine, Habitat had a 45 percent vacancy rate.

For emergency work orders completed at 1611 S. Racine, Habitat scored an "F" with 62 percent. At 1633 W. Madison, Habitat scored a "D" with a 96 percent completion rate.

The Hispanic Housing Corp., another private management firm recently selected with a history in CHA, scored an "F" for the vacancy rate of 26 percent Greenview/Eckhart Park apartments. However, Hispanic Housing scored an "A" in emergency work orders completed with 100 percent.

Resident Comments

CHA residents had mixed feelings as to whether privatization of all the developments would improve their daily lives.

Brenda Williams, a resident of Madden Park Homes for the past 15 years, said the Habitat Corporation managed her development for several years until 1998. While Habitat managed her development, work orders were promptly handled but the work was poorly done compared to CHA, Williams said.

"Habitat addressed the work orders

faster but did poor work," she said. She said that it would be hard to tell if future private management would be any better. Williams suggested that extensive screening be done of all incoming residents. She also recommended iron-rod fencing and intercom gates around the developments as well as security patrols inside and outside of all CHA properties.

"If you're going to put something nice in and you want it to last and you don't have someone to take care of it properly, then you need a baby-sitter to watch to make sure people don't get it," she said. Under the terms of the "Protective Services" portion of the plan, CHA will fund at least security guard service 10 hours daily for each of its senior buildings. Various family buildings slated for demolition will receive security guard service also under the supervision of the private companies.

One unidentified Ida B. Wells resident referred to the drug trafficking on CHA developments.

"This is the dealers' business," the resident said. "People who do security are not going to put their lives in jeopardy for nothing."

This resident also suggested surprise unit inspections and recommended supervisors be put in place to go behind workers ensuring that they carry out their job.

"They (the property managers) should do a better job at screening. Do follow-ups and make surprise visits on the units," said the resident. "And have supervisors for the management workers."

Maner Jean Wiley, Local Advisory Council president of Hilliard Homes, a CHA senior and family development currently under private management, likes the idea of privatization.

"Because we stand out like a sore thumb, I think it's going to be good for the residents because that will stop the saying that we are separate from the other part of Chicago. So I think this is one great move that the mayor and the city is doing," Wiley said.

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HUD's Concern

HUD Assistant Secretary Lucas said by closely monitoring CHA, he and his staff will make sure the CHA plan succeeds.

"Our concern is that we work this revitalization and this reconstruction of CHA in the most beneficial way. We're not worried about failure. We want to work with CHA and the residents to make sure it doesn't fail."

Transforming CHA CHA's Plan for Senior Residents

by Julio Martinez

The senior citizens residing in 85 Chicago Housing Authority buildings, worried by the agency's five-year plan for transformation, want to know how they will benefit under this plan and how this money will be used in remodeling their dwellings.

To provide them with professional information, on Feb. 2, I had the honor of interviewing CHA Chairperson Sharon Gist-Gilliam. Gist-Gilliam said, "We currently have 9,480 units in 58 buildings for the elderly. Using \$350 million, we are going to rebuild each of these units and install air-conditioning in all of these units so that senior citizens will not have the problem that they had last year during the heat wave, when it was 104 degrees for three straight days.

"We have a good plan for the 58 buildings for the elderly because they are in better condition than the family buildings. But we know that it has already been more than 40 years since some of these buildings and the inside walls and the electrical, plumbing and heating systems were built. What we are trying to do is a 30-year rehab so that these buildings remain repair-free for 30 more years.

"What we are trying to do in this transformation is to move residents into vacant units in

their own buildings while their apartments are being repaired and as soon as their new units are ready, they will not have any problem in going back. However, in other buildings, like 6400 North Sheridan, which has 460 units and only 4 vacant units, we will have to plan how the floor, the walls and the plumbing will be remodeled.

"This will be the hardest job because to repair their units, we will have to relocate (residents) into other buildings that might have vacant units and, as soon as their units are ready for them to return, they won't have a problem," Gist-Gilliam remarked.

According to a Jan. 6 CHA press release, many senior residents complained to CHA that their buildings had become havens for prostitutes and drug addicts. CHA Executive Director Phillip Jackson then revealed a seven-point plan to remove from these buildings young residents who are making life unbearable for senior residents. He asked for \$350 million to upgrade senior-citizen housing, including 24-hour security. Jackson also asked the federal government for funds for the disabled, he told the City Council Committee, headed by Ald. Ray Suarez (31).

Jackson also asked for a strong committee to be set up to investigate individuals who want to reside in buildings for the elderly. Jackson

stated he wanted these 58 buildings be set aside just for the elderly.

He also praised Ald. Arenda Troutman (20) for asking for a reform resolution for housing for the elderly.

"This is good news," said Shirley Hammond, president of the Senior Housing North Local Advisory Council. Hammond said seniors are traumatized and are often assaulted by guests of young residents when they go to dump their garbage down the chute.

"We have residents who are 80 who are proud of having 25-year-old sweethearts," Hammond remarked. "This never happens with the 50-year-olds. The girls visit them once a month. These women are hookers. They don't go just to these apartments but they knock on every door to see who needs their services."

"Most of the problems are because of the young residents," Jackson said. He explained that he is trying to make CHA senior buildings exclusively for the elderly.

"While we are going to improve the quality of life for the elderly, we are also going to continue to improve services for the disabled, complying with the 504 Disability Compliance Act," Jackson said.

"Individuals may use Section 8 vouchers and we are going to provide more money for



CHA Board Chairperson Sharon Gist-Gilliam.

Photo by Julio Martinez

accessibility. We are not going to kick anyone out but anyone who is causing us problems will have to look for another place to live. We will not tolerate them any longer," Jackson said. All senior housing will soon be managed by private companies. Each manager will have to implement a security plan that will have to be approved by CHA.

Jackson promised to clean up the problems that plague senior citizens. Non-residents who are guests may not enter the buildings and stay. He is putting a restriction on this problem by limiting the time someone may visit.

El Plan De Cinco Años

por Julio Martínez

Los ciudadanos de la tercera edad que residen en los 85 edificios de la Autoridad de Vivienda de Chicago (CHA) están preocupados por el plan de cinco años de la agencia para la transformación de estos edificios y quieren saber cómo se beneficiarán con este plan y cómo se usará este dinero en la remodelación de sus viviendas.

Para suministrarles información profesional, el pasado 2 de febrero tuve el honor de entrevistar a Sharon Gist-Gilliam, presidenta de la CHA.

Gist-Gilliam declaró: "actualmente tenemos 9,480 unidades de vivienda en 58 edificios para personas de la tercera edad. A un costo de \$350 millones, vamos a reconstruir cada una de estas unidades de vivienda e instalar aire acondicionado en todas estas unidades, de tal modo que los ciudadanos de la tercera edad no tengan el mismo problema que tuvieron el año pasado durante la ola de calor que alcanzó los 40°C (104°F) durante tres días seguidos.

"Tenemos un buen plan para estos 58 edificios donde residen estas personas de la tercera

edad, porque esos edificios están en mejores condiciones que los edificios usados como viviendas familiares; pero sabemos que ya han pasado más de 40 años desde que se construyeron algunos de estos edificios con sus correspondientes paredes interiores, sistemas eléctricos, calefacción y plomería. Lo que estamos tratando de realizar es una rehabilitación para 30 años, de tal modo que estos edificios se mantengan en perfecto estado y sin necesidad de reparaciones durante 30 ó más años.

"Lo que estamos tratando de hacer en esta transformación es trasladar a los residentes a unidades de vivienda vacías en sus propios edificios mientras se reparan sus unidades y tan pronto como sus nuevas unidades estén listas, los residentes no tendrán ningún problema en volver a habitarlas. Sin embargo; en los otros edificios, como el situado en 6400 North Sheridan, que tiene 460 unidades con tan sólo 4 unidades vacías, tenemos que hacer planes para ver cómo se podrán restaurar los pisos, las paredes y la plomería.

"Este será el trabajo más duro, porque para reparar estas unidades tendremos que reubicar a los (residentes) en otros edificios que tengan unidades vacías y, tan pronto como sus unidades estén listas para su regreso, ellos no tendrán ningún problema," afirmó Gist-Gilliam.

Según un comunicado de prensa de la CHA fechado el 6 de enero de este año, muchos de los residentes de la tercera edad se han estado quejando a la CHA de que sus edificios se han convertido en un refugio para prostitutas y drogadictos. Phillip Jackson, Director Ejecutivo de la CHA, reveló un plan que consta de siete puntos para sacar de estos edificios a los residentes jóvenes que les están haciendo la vida insoportable a los residentes de la tercera edad. Jackson pidió \$350 millones para mejorar la calidad de las viviendas de los ciudadanos de la tercera edad, incluyendo un sistema de vigilancia las 24 horas del día. Jackson también le pidió al gobierno fed-

eral fondos para las personas incapacitadas, según su solicitud al Comité del Consejo Municipal, dirigido por el Concejal Ray Suarez (31).

Jackson también pidió la formación de un energético comité para investigar a las personas que solicitan residir en los edificios destinados a ciudadanos de la tercera edad, comentando que él quería que estos 58 edificios sean usados exclusivamente para personas de avanzada edad.

También elogió a la Concejal Arenda Troutman (20) por haber solicitado una resolución de reforma para las viviendas de las personas de la tercera edad.

"Esto es una buena noticia," aseguró Shirley Hammond, presidente del Consejo asesor local norte de viviendas para ciudadanos de la tercera edad. Hammond afirmó que los residentes de la tercera edad están traumatizados y con frecuencia son asaltados por los visitantes de los residentes jóvenes cuando los ancianos salen a arrojar la basura por la rampa. "Tenemos residentes que tienen 80 años y están orgullosos de tener noviecas de 25 años de edad," nos comentó Hammond. "Esto nunca ocurre con los residentes cincuentones quienes reciben visitas de "chicas" una vez al mes. Estas chicas son prostitutas. Ellas no van únicamente a los apartamentos de los cincuentones, sino que también tocan en cada puerta de los demás residentes para ver si necesitan de sus servicios.

"La mayoría de estos problemas son causados por los residentes

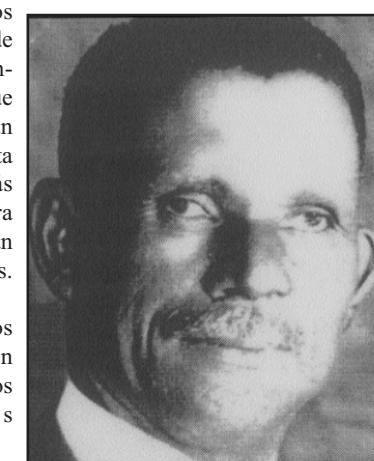
jóvenes," señaló Jackson explicando que él está tratando de hacer que los edificios de la CHA destinados a los ciudadanos de la tercera edad sean exclusivamente para personas de avanzada edad.

"A la vez que mejoraremos la calidad de vida de los residentes de la tercera edad, también seguiremos mejorando los servicios para las personas incapacitadas, cumpliendo así con la Ley 504 sobre adaptación para personas incapacitadas," prometió Jackson.

"Las personas pueden usar los compradores de la Sección 8 y vamos a proporcionar más dinero para las vías de acceso. No vamos a sacar a nadie, pero quienes nos causen problemas tendrán que buscarse otro lugar para vivir. Ya no vamos a tolerarlos más," advirtió Jackson.

Todas las viviendas de los ciudadanos de la tercera edad pronto serán administradas por compañías privadas. Cada gerente tendrá que poner en práctica un plan de vigilancia que deberá ser aprobado por la CHA.

Jackson prometió eliminar los problemas que atormentan a los residentes de la tercera edad. Los visitantes que no sean residentes no pueden entrar en los edificios y quedarse. Se está corrigiendo este problema limitando el tiempo de estadía de los visitantes.



BORN IN SLAVERY DIED IN DIGNITY

A former slave (left) born in the 1800s who died in the 1900s as free man. The portrait is part of the "International Society of Sons and Daughters of Slave Ancestry" photo collection that is on display in February at the Charles Hayes Family Investment Center (FIC).



CHA residents being honored at the 10th Annual Tenant Patrol Recognition Ceremony Feb. 5 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

Photo by Julio Martinez

Transforming CHA Rights and Wrong of Public Housing

by Jacqueline Thompson

When the news about the new public school near the Harold Ickes Homes was released and those families that had been relocated into rehabilitated or nearly rehabbed apartments began to settle, unrest was created among other residents.

Many residents started asking, "If they (the city and the Chicago Housing Authority) are to spend \$30-35 million on a new school campus right here in our midst, why can't we get our apartments simply painted or new kitchen sinks and cabinets?"

Hundreds of families have not had a paint job in their



A pile of garbage heaped up by the nearby broken door leading to the garbage chute at the Harold Ickes development.

Photo by Jacqueline Thompson

apartments in 15 to 20 years or more. Few residents are surprised by these stories but many will surely be glad to know they are not alone in feeling the neglect of CHA's – their landlord - responsibility.

As a resident, I inquired of a past manager why we never had regular decorating done in our apartments. I was told that there was no money in their budget for it.

I pressed on: "What can I do to get my place redecorated?"

"I don't know," said the manager. "All I know is we have no money for such things."

Speaking with other residents, I realized my experience had been repeated many times.

My nearest neighbor, a senior citizen, welcomed me into her apartment with my camera to vent her frustrations. I asked her, "How long has your wall cabinet been worn out with no doors, no globe over your ceiling light and your kitchen sink out of order?"

Mattie Lucas replied, "For a long time. Five or six years. Last year, a man came and looked around and said he would be back."

"He came back in December, looked around again and said he would be back again. In 30 years, I've had my sons



This worn out, rusty and neglected kitchen cabinet is a possible health risk for toddlers occupying this Harold Ickes unit.

Photo by Jacqueline Thompson

paint twice but that's it."

I further asked Lucas, "Have you ever reported these things to your local maintenance and management office?"

She said, "Yes. They came out a long time ago and told me it would take too much to replace the sink and cabinets. I was surprised they said that but what could I do?"

I visited several other neighbors, many of whom had worn out kitchen appliances, sinks, cabinets, stoves and a film of grease visibly years in the making.

Tammy Spencer said, "Please take pictures. Someone needs to see these things. We need new stoves, cabinets and blinds."

Jackie Thomas said, "We have been flooded so much here. My husband has put huge boulders in the kitchen sink so we can go away or sleep. You never know when you or the apartments adjacent to yours will flood.

"When I have to cook, wash dishes or clean the refrigerator, I have to go to the bathroom, wait for the hot water that trickles to fill a basin or pot and return to the kitchen." The apartments next to the elevator flood every weekend in my building, 2250 S. State St. When you go to church and return, you have to wade in the water. Frustrating conditions thrive both inside and outside the buildings.

I also spoke to our building president, Jo Ann Williams, who had an interesting experience to relate as we chatted about repairs and housing inspections: "An inspector came to my apartment and when I answered the door, he took a look from the doorway and said, 'There's nothing wrong with your apartment.' I said, 'Yes, there is.' And I had to invite him in to point out the things that needed to be done. That was last year. They've never come back. Neither have any repairs been done."

Some Answers

I sought some answers as to just what is expected of CHA tenants and our landlord and just what one can do as a resident to ensure compliance of our landlord's responsibilities.

First off, I found out that the Chicago City Council issues a pamphlet copy of the Residential Landlord and Tenant Ordinance. The pamphlet is available at the office of the City Clerk, Room 107 at City Hall, 121 N. LaSalle St.

Keep in mind the Chicago Housing Authority is a Chicago landlord and subject to abide by the Landlord Tenant Ordinance. In order to validate the information spelled out in the Landlord Tenant Ordinance, I spoke to Brendan Schiller of the Metropolitan Tenants Organization (MTO), who was able to give me qualified, experienced answers to pointed questions from frustrated residents.

Most importantly, MTO has a hotline: (773) 292-4988 Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 4 p.m.- 8 p.m., Wednesdays 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Fridays 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Schiller said CHA and its tenants are required to comply with the Landlord Tenant Ordinance. Schiller said, "CHA is one of the worst slum landlords in the city and it is harder to go through their bureaucracy to get the job done."

Schiller's advice is to call the hotline numbers above and be active in the pursuit of getting the job done. Be sure you've contacted management to let your problems be known. Get a copy of the Residential Landlord and Tenant Ordinance and share the facts with your neighbors.

According to the Ordinance:

"If the landlord fails to maintain the property in material compliance with the



Rust and old water deposit buildup on the bathtub and sink in this Harold Ickes bathroom.

Photo by Jacqueline Thompson

code and the tenant or tenant's family or guests are not responsible for the failure, the tenant may:

Request in writing that the landlord make repairs within 14 days or the tenant can withhold an amount of rent that reasonably reflects reduced value of the rent.

Request in writing that the landlord make repairs within 14 days or tenant may have the repairs made and deduct up to \$ 500 or half the month's rent, whichever is more, but not to exceed one month's rent. The repairs must be in compliance with existing law and building regulations. A receipt for repairs must be given to the landlord and no more than the cost of the repairs can be deducted from the rent.

"File suit against the landlord for damages and injunctive relief."

I spoke to Dan Lindsy of the National Center on Poverty Law. Lindsy said, "If you (a tenant) go so far as to withhold rent money because repairs are not being made, the money should be put in escrow so that if you have to go to court about the situation. You will have to produce the rent you set aside."

MTO's Schiller added that the Landlord Tenant Ordinance does not allow tenants to withhold rent for failing to paint the walls. The ordinance's "code for failure to maintain floors, interior walls or ceilings in sound condition and good repair does not include painting of walls."

MADAM and THE RENT MAN

Editor's Note: In celebration of Black History Month, the following poem by African American writer Langston Hughes is published by permission of Alfred A Knopf Inc., a division of Random House Publishers Inc.

The rent man knocked

He said Howdy-do

I said, What can I do for you?

He said, you know

Your rent is due

I said Listen before I'd pay
I'd go to Hades and rot away!

The sink is broke, the water
don't run

And you ain't done a thing
You've promised to've done

Back window's cracked,
kitchen floor squeaks
There's rats in the cellar and
the attic leaks

He said Madam, It's not up to
me
I'm just the agent, don't you
see

I said naturally, you pass the
buck
If it's money you want
You're out of luck

He said Madam, I ain't
pleased
I said neither am I

So we agrees.

- Langston Hughes

Transforming CHA The Revitalization of Ida B. Wells

by Arminta Clark

"Wells is on the Rise. Wells is on the Rise. Wells is on the Rise."

Members of the Ida B. Wells Local Advisory Council chant this slogan during meetings and community events and print it on posters in an effort to get residents more involved in the community.

"Wells is on the Rise" is the name of the strategic plan for the redevelopment of Ida B. Wells, said Local Advisory Council (LAC) President Sandra Young, Vice President Lee Esther Peebles and Ernestine Clark, president of 527 E. Browning St.

Young is also a member of the Chicago Housing Authority Board of Commissioners. Young and Clark have each lived in Wells for 23 years. Peebles has resided there for 40 years.

During a recent tour of the development, Young, Clark and Peebles said there are a lot of positive things occurring in Wells. Peebles said, "I can remember distributing bags of food to children in 1960 on the street corner. These were called 'chokes' by the children. Today we are proud to see food sites where children can sit at tables and eat as if they were at home."

The Wells Darrow Senior Citizens Club was organized in 1970. Peebles is the fifth president. She took office in 1995 replacing Lurena Dent. The name of the club was changed to the Sophisticated Seniors club. "There are several senior clubs in our development today," Peebles said.

Clark said, "There is also the Wells Extension Tutorial (WET) after-school program for the children, just to name a few."

Young explained, "Like all public housing across the country that is going through transformation, we're no different. As a matter of fact, we embrace the new change."

"In August of last year, a beautification took place. Grass was laid down starting from 39th and King Drive to 38th and Langley along with side walks being repaired.

"Four seven-story high-rise buildings were demolished in the Wells development. They were 534 E. 36th St., 510 E. 36th Place, 514 E. 36th St. and 551 E. 36th Place.

"There were once 10 high-rise buildings in all. The other six buildings, along with the row houses and the walk-up buildings, will go through a renovation process," Young said.

The residents of Wells and Madden Park worked with the Chicago Housing Authority, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Habitat Company and the city Department of Planning and chose a developer for the project, McCormick & Baron.

The developer will be redeveloping 90 acres of land that will include all of Ida B. Wells, Clarence Darrow Homes and Madden Park Homes.

Where the four seven-story buildings were once standing in Wells, 99 units will be built.

"This will include moderate-income res-



Ruins of 4 former CHA Ida B. Wells 7 story high-rise buildings recently demolished along 36th Place.

Photo by Arminta Clark

now whereas living in the Darrow Homes, we felt isolated. Like anything, there are pros and cons. There is no activity by our front door."

The resident said there were some problems with her new apartment. The wrong light fixtures were installed throughout the unit. The bathroom fixtures and kitchen cabinets were improperly installed and the entire floor needs to be re-tiled. The resident also said a few walls need to be re-plastered. But the resident's whole family was pleased overall with the new apartment. "I am glad to report no roaches and rats in our apartment. No more urine-smelling elevators," the resident said.

Ald. Preckwinkle

Ald. Toni Preckwinkle (4) said, "A year ago at this time, we began a process for a Hope VI grant with the federal government. That would go toward the redevelopment of Ida B. Wells, Clarence Darrow Homes, Madden Park Homes and part of the Oakland community around 36th and Cottage Grove.

"That process has been halted to bring on board a developer to work with us. Right now, we are in the process of negotiating a contract with the developer. In the month of May of this year, an application for the Hope VI will be submitted asking for \$35 million. The grants are awarded in September and October. "Most important," Preckwinkle added, "is the residents' involvement and input, like Sandra Young and Leroy Square from Ida B. Wells and Eunice Crosby, (LAC) president of Madden Park.

"Residents from the Oakland community have been very much involved in the redevelopment process from the beginning. And of course, the usual suspects naturally were involved: the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), representatives from Habitat, the city control planner as well as myself."

Preckwinkle said she can't speak for other wards but she's trying really hard to provide both rehab and new units that are affordable for working people.

"I am pleased we have acknowledged the mistakes in the last 40 years. We isolated and concentrated poor people.

"However, acknowledging the mistakes and having a real plan for providing housing for people outside of traditional public housing developments is a different thing. I hope

that we will move quickly to provide the affordable housing we are going to need for those who are leaving public housing developments," Preckwinkle said.

Preckwinkle said the redevelopment of Wells, Darrow, Madden Park and the Oakland community means that a good response to the upcoming U.S. Census is particularly important.

"In the African American community generally there is a fairly low response to census. What that means is that our people aren't counted. Federal dollars and state dollars come into Chicago on the basis of the census numbers.

"Unless we get a good count and people respond to the census, the city of Chicago loses money. They would lose money for health care. You lose money for housing. We lose money for critical public services. We are trying to get everybody to respond to the census.

"Yes, there is a decrease in the population as residents are being displaced in public housing. But in the 4th Ward, there has been an increase in population particular to affordable housing development.

"There is new affordable housing on 43rd and Cottage Grove and four blocks south of the Clarence Darrow Homes, there is affordable housing being built.

"Where there has been a law for public housing, there has also been an tremendous increase this last decade for affordable housing," Preckwinkle said.

A Personal Note

Pamela Walker Ford, also known as Isatou, passed away Jan. 16, 2000. Her family was one of the first families to move into 540 E. 36th St. They lived in apartment 302 beginning in the mid-'50s. Her close friends and family know that she would have liked to see the redevelopment of Wells.

I knew Mrs. Ford from the time we were both living in Wells. I lived at 527 E. Browning and 551 E. 36th Place for 10 years beginning in 1959.

Mrs. Ford would have liked to know that I wrote this story and would have wished me "Nam Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo," a Buddhist chant that means "devotion to the mystic law of cause and effect through sound."

"Yes, there is a decrease in the population as residents are being displaced in public housing."

-Ald. Toni Preckwinkle, 4th ward

Young added, "And for our children, we have the Coretta Scott King YWCA, where Adrienne Hudson is the director and teacher. A few doors down we are proud to announce a resident-owned business, ARStudio by Annie Smith."

Young said Smith teaches children basic photography.

"She has been a positive role model and mentor to our children."

Young said Smith has introduced inner-city children to photography, an art to which they otherwise would not be exposed. Young added that photography could become the career of some of these young people.

idents," Young said.

Young also said that the Wells development has welcomed 30 new families.

Last November, 40 families were living in the last building of the Clarence Darrow Homes located at 706 E. Pershing Road. They were offered a Section 8 certificate, scattered site housing or relocation to another public housing development. 30 families moved into Wells. That building is scheduled for demolition some time in April, according to Young. 134 units will be built on Darrow's land.

When the units have been completed, Young said the residents that once lived in

Darrow Homes will be able to relocate in the new units. A resident that once occupied an apartment in 706 E. Pershing Road expressed happiness about living in the Ida B. Wells development.

"They should tear down the building," said the resident, who asked to remain anonymous. "My family feels like they are part of a community



Ernestine Clark (left), president of 527 E. Browning St., Lee Esther Peebles, Ida B. Wells LAC vice-president, Sandra Young, Ida B. Wells LAC president, Francine Washington, Stateway Gardens LAC president and Bobbie Bolden, (seated) Director of CHA Resident Organization.
Photo by Arminta Clark

R a c o F o r c o n g r o s s

by Beauty Turner

Welcome to the Chi-town derby. The candidates for the First Congressional District Democratic primary race are off and running. So pull up a seat, rest your feet, and feast your eyes on who is going for the prize. CHA residents and others, you need to know the power is within you to elect or reject. I conducted interviews with the three major candidates: incumbent U.S. Rep. Bobby Rush, state Sen. Barack Obama (D-13) and state Sen. Donne Trotter (D-16). All three candidates want change at CHA. They all want to tear down high-rises and redevelop.

Bobby Rush

U.S. Rep. Bobby Rush was first elected to Congress in November 1992. Rush attended Marshall High School and served in the military from 1963 to 1968. A former member of the Black Panther Party, Rush holds a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in political science. Rush was a Chicago alderman from 1983 to 1993. He and his wife Carolyn have 5 children.

Rush responded to *RJ*'s questions in writing. Rush said he already has made a difference during his years in Congress and will continue if he is re-elected for a fifth term. "When I first came to Congress in 1993, the people of the First Congressional District asked me to address Social Security, health care, education, crime, jobs and economic development," Rush wrote.

Rush claimed credit for a law which restored Medicare cuts after the Balanced Budget Act of 1997.

Rush said he had worked to get Internet connections, higher pay for teachers, smaller classrooms and early childhood education to inner-city schools.

On crime, Rush said he pushed legislation to get guns off the streets and supported a law which brought 100,000 new police officers into cities nationwide.

On economic development, Rush said he brought millions of dollars to the district for economic development and passed a law to help low-income and very low-income entrepreneurs.

Rush said he would continue to work on these issues.

"I will continue to lead in key focus areas," he wrote.

Rush's district includes CHA areas such as Stateway Gardens, Robert Taylor and Washington Park homes. Rush said he put a lot into negotiations with the Chicago Housing Authority, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the residents concerning CHA's 5-year plan. Rush held town hall meetings with residents and wrote letters to HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo after reviewing the final draft of the plan.

Rush said he is not sure the city's plan will protect residents. But he claimed he was able to get the city to give residents a binding contract to be able to return to CHA property when the redevelopment is complete. Rush said no demolitions would take place without making sure that residents have a place to live in privately owned housing.

"I am neither comfortable nor confident about the city's plan," Rush wrote.

"CHA promised residents that they would have the right to return but the promise was empty because a promise is not a contract."

Rush said all Chicago public housing

should be redeveloped. But the most important part of the CHA plan will be making it happen.

"This redevelopment plan presents a golden opportunity for residents of Chicago public housing and the City of Chicago," Rush said.

"But we must keep in mind that the city plan is just the beginning."

"I will continue to work with the CAC (Central Advisory Council), HUD and the CHA to ensure that implementation occurs to the benefit of the residents."

From public housing to gun violence, Rush stated it is "pathetic" that it is easier to get a gun than a business license in the nation. "I know that every day, ordinary Americans are

win the primary and then go out and collect input from the community concerning issues. Obama criticized Rush for being "inaccessible."

Obama said Rush "hasn't provided much information with what is going on in Washington and hasn't sorted out a lot of input from the communities about issues that the communities think is important."

Obama also criticized Rush concerning public housing issues.

"I believe that our congressman should have been more aggressive over the last 10 years working with the residents for a plan for change," Obama said.

Obama said he supported the CHA's plans to renovate and rehab buildings. He added that he

"But...if you haven't been in trouble with the law after a year, then they should take the felony off your record."

Obama said he believes in stricter gun laws. But he added that the congressman should give out more information.

"I think that if you should have to take a test to drive a car, a safety test, then there should be no reason it shouldn't be the same way for a gun," Obama said.

"I think that the congressman's office should be like a clearinghouse to receive information."

Donne Trotter

State Sen. Donne Trotter (D-16) was born Jan. 30, 1950, in Cairo. He has a bachelor's degree and a law degree. Before he was elected to the Illinois General Assembly as a representative in 1988, Trotter was a senior hospital administrator. Trotter and his wife Rose have 4 children.

Trotter wants to be a congressman to serve his communities by drawing private corporations and others into the district.

"I feel that the communities want someone to represent them who is going to enrich their communities by bringing in the dollars to ensure quality. And by the way, the current congressman hasn't done that," Trotter said. "First and foremost, we are living in fantastic economic times. I will try to start up or get a committee to bring back resources to the community so that we can be equal partners in this wealth that is in this country."

Trotter said he would support the CHA five-year plan as long as it benefits residents and CHA employees.

"I'm all for getting quality housing in the same areas but I also feel that we should have some job protection concerning the residents and the workers in CHA so that no one should be kicked out of the workforce," Trotter said.

Trotter said all the CHA high-rises should be demolished because they are not good places to raise a family. He also said mixed-income neighborhoods should be built in the community.

"We do need low-rises where people can live in dignity and have flexibility," Trotter said.

"We need to look at mixed housing objectively."

"We need to make the residents seem like they are more of a part of the communities and I also believe in rebuilding on site." As a politician, Trotter feels leadership should ease CHA residents' minds.

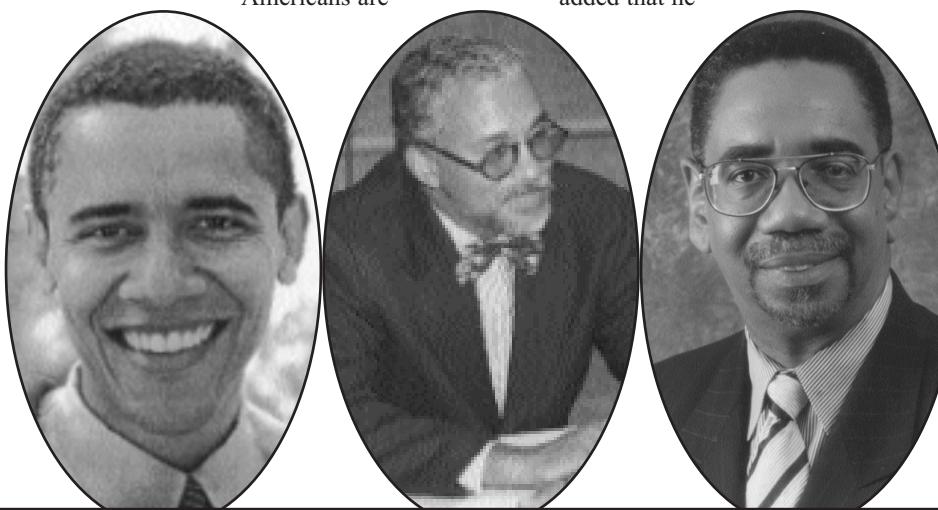
"Change is never easy. It's always scary. But we can combat their (residents') fears by making them a part of the process and the discussion," Trotter said.

On the gun issue, Trotter believed in the state law which made possession of a gun a felony. But if someone has not committed another crime after a year, the felony should be taken off an individual's record.

"The original law intended to take illegal guns off of the street, not to give law-abiding citizens a record," Trotter said.

Trotter feels "the strong gun lobby and the wrong interpretation of the Constitution" make it easier to obtain a gun license than a business license.

If he becomes congressman, Trotter said he will change the gun laws by continuing to do what he has been doing as a state legislator. "I make promises I can keep and I don't just make promises just to be making them."



State Sens. Barack Obama (D-13, from left) and Donne Trotter and U.S. Rep. Bobby Rush (D-1)

All three candidates want change at CHA. They all want to tear down high-rises and redevelop.

sick of guns and the violence that they wreak, especially in our community," Rush stated. Rush stated Americans don't necessarily have to change gun laws to stop gun violence. Instead of legislation, Rush stated Americans have to change their thinking concerning violence.

"We've got to change not only the laws but also the culture of violence, the glorification of the gun," Rush stated.

Barack Obama

State Sen. Barack Obama (D-13) said his South Side district includes Hyde Park and South Shore as well as parts of Woodlawn and Englewood.

A first-term state senator, Obama, 38, is married with one child and is a member of Trinity United Church of Christ.

Obama was the director of Project Vote, a voter registration project in 1992 which registered over 100,000 new voters. Obama said he worked with the CAC to register residents. He claimed Project Vote helped Bill Clinton and Carol Moseley Braun get elected.

Obama is a civil rights attorney who teaches at the University of Chicago Law School.

Obama said he wanted to be a congressman to serve communities.

"I'm somebody who believes that politics is a mission," Obama said in a February interview.

"I didn't go into politics because I needed a job but because I wanted to serve and I consider my political career an extension of my career my whole entire life long."

A confident Obama said he that he will

supported efforts to demolish some buildings.

"I'm also in support of that portion of the plan that seeks to consolidate some of the residents into fewer buildings," Obama said. "I do think that it is much too expensive to operate big high-rises that have high vacancy rates."

Because of the shortage of affordable housing in the city, Obama said he does not believe there is enough housing for CHA residents to move into privately owned housing. "I don't think it is realistic to demolish all of the high-rises all at once because the numbers of units to replace all of the high-rises cannot be built in a short period of time," Obama said.

"If we are providing replacement housing, we need to make sure that public housing residents have a wide range of choices of neighborhoods, not just in the city but throughout the region."

Obama said the First Congressional District representative should be in a "cooperative relationship with CHA and the city of Chicago."

But Obama added that CHA residents' lives should be "improved by any plan approved by the federal government and the Department of Housing and Urban Development."

On gun issues, Obama said he supported the state law which made use of a gun a felony. But Obama said the law was unfair to minorities. Obama said first-time offenders deserve another chance so they can avoid having a felony on their record.

"Too many of our young people think that a gun is a toy and feel that they can intimidate or hurt other people," Obama said.

KOREAN

Translation



City of Chicago
Richard M. Daley, Mayor



Dep. of Public Health
Shelia Lyne, RSM Commissioner

Public Health Services



Comprehensive Clinics

All telephone area codes are 312, except where indicated.

Comprehensive Clinics

Englewood	641 West 63rd Street	747-7831
Lower West Side	1713 South Ashland	746-5157
Roseland	200 East 115th Street	747-9500
Uptown	845 West Wilson	744-1938
West Town	2418 West Division	744-0943

Maternal/Child Clinics

Grand Boulevard	4410 South State	747-0005
South Chicago	2938 East 89th Street	747-5285
South Lawndale	3059 West 26th Street	747-0066

Public Health Clinic

Sexually Transmitted Disease/HIV	530 East 31st Street	747-0102
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Affiliated Clinics

Circle Family Care	4909 West Division	(773) 921-8100
Komed Health Clinic	4230 South Greenwood	(773) 268-7600
Lakeview Neighborhood Health Center	2849 North Clark	(773) 528-1188
Lawndale Christian Health Center	3860 West Ogden	(773) 521-5006
Mile Square	2045 West Washington	996-9000
Woodlawn Adult Health	6337 South Woodlawn	(773) 747-7700



Key Public Health Telephone Numbers

All telephone area codes are 312, except where indicated

CDPH General Information	747-9884
TTY	744-8599
Addictions Services	
Outpatient Program	(773) 476-0622
Residential (Women/Girls)	850-0080
Residential (Men)	(773) 737-4600
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Birth Certificates of Newborns	744-3796
Board of Health	747-9875
Cancer Information	
Case Management	1-800-4-CANCER
Communicable Disease Reporting	747-8816
Death Certificates	746-5380
Epidemiology	744-3800
Food and Dairy Protection	747-9810
Health Surveillance	747-FOOD
Hispanic Affairs	747-9726
HIV/AIDS	747-8820
Statewide Hotline	747-AIDS
Immunization	1-800-243-AIDS
Chicago CareVan Program	746-5380
Internet Address	746-6122
Lead Poisoning	http://www.ci.chi.il.us
Mental Health	747-LEAD
Nutrition Services/WIC Program	747-9768
Public Health Nursing	747-9140
Public Information/News Media Requests	747-9822
Sexually Transmitted Disease	747-9805
Tuberculosis	747-5400
Violence Prevention	746-5380
Crisis Hotline	747-8787
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May 1999

157298-11-5

We Serve With Pride, We Treat With Compassion.

by Cenabeth Cross

On Jan. 28, as I left for work, a bulky, Black cop stopped me as I came out of the elevator in my building, 2710 S. Ogden Ave. One police officer was on the elevator with me as well. He grabbed me by the arm and began to pat me down. As he was doing this, he asked me, "Where are the rocks?" After the search, he asked for my bag, which was already open so I would be able to put my mail in the mailbox in the lobby. He took it, looked inside and began to shake it. He kept asking me where the rocks were. He then asked me where my boyfriend was. I told him that I didn't have one. He then asked my apartment number. I told him and he agreed. He said he had just seen me come out of that apartment and let me go. Outside, a police



Condolences

The RJ staff sends our condolences to the family and friends of former Chicago Police Commander Michael Tolliver. Tolliver, 51, was a 30-year police veteran who created a computer lab for residents of Robert Taylor Homes

Photo by Cenabeth Cross

car circled the perimeters of Ogden Courts and the Lawndale Complex.

On Feb. 8, a large white cop chased an older gentleman through the lobby as I stepped into the cubicle to get my mail.

The police in the Ogden Courts complex are on the case - on the tenants' cases mostly. The day I was searched while I was leaving for work stays with me.

The doors on the building have been taken off for the convenience of the police. This leaves us all in danger. The drug dealers are searching everyone who comes in, too.

On Jan. 26, I interviewed Robin Davis, who told me about the white policewoman who had taken off her coat to fight some of the boys at 2650 S. Ogden Ave.

The coat was on the floor of the lobby when I first came into the building, under the non-working public telephone. None of the public telephones work in either building.

I asked the janitor about the coat at the time and he told me it belonged to a police officer. He took it with him.

Davis said she witnessed the commotion the night before, just before police officers ordered tenants to clear the halls.

Davis told me she had never seen a Black police officer in her building. She described a December raid lead by a white female police officer.

"They came in the building looking mad with their guns pointed and there were children still in the halls. We were all afraid," she said. Other residents told me later that the same police officers who conducted the raid returned on Jan. 28. The officers searched Davis and put handcuffs on her when she voiced her opinions. They told her

Stop the Violence



Ogden Courts resident Robin Davis.
Photo by Cenabeth Cross

that she should watch her mouth and later let her go. Davis goes back and forth between the two Ogden Courts high-rises because she lives with her two young boys at 2650 and her mother lives at 2710. There is no vertical patrol in either building.

Stateway Gardens

I recently interviewed Tommy Adams in Stateway Gardens. Adams alleged that on his way to the bus stop one night, the police grabbed him, slammed him to the ground and handcuffed him.

Adams said he was with his wife, Pearl, and that the officers threatened to arrest her. Adams said he was beaten some more and then was taken to jail.

When his mother went to the jail at 51st Street and Wentworth Avenue, Adams said she was told that he wasn't there. Adams said he was released after his mother started to make some commotion and ultimately filed a complaint.

I went back to Stateway Gardens the following Saturday and saw what could be a real war zone. Starting at State Street, dealers asked me what I wanted. I had to cross the fields to the back row of buildings where I was commanded to take my scarf off my face. One young man asked another if he had his gun.

When I finally reached the building that was my destination, I had to explain to the 6 or 7 people blocking the entrance that I was only there for a visit. I was allowed to get on the elevator at 4101 S. State St.

This is the same building that Antwan Thomas, 20, was shot and killed by the police on Dec. 27. A Dec. 28 *Chicago Sun-Times* article by Lorraine Forte states that an officer was coming down the stairway at 4022 S. State St. when he was shot.

The officer was attacked by a group of men and his gun went off accidentally, according to police spokesperson Laurie Sanders.

Another version of the story was printed the same day in the *Chicago Tribune* and written by Evan Osnos and Raoul V. Mowatt. In this article, Sanders refused to identify the officer or his partner.

Vertical Patrols?

On Nov. 5, *Sun-Times* writer Frank Main wrote a piece on how public housing arrests have soared.

Main gave numbers but despite the increases, Mildred Dennis, president of the Local Advisory Council for the southern half of the Robert Taylor Homes, said the Chicago police should be more visible and the only way to do this is with vertical patrols.

In my interview with Michael Tolliver in the last issue, he said Chicago Police were in place at Robert Taylor Homes, Cabrini-Green and Altgeld Gardens. He commented on a particularly high arrest rate in Dearborn homes. Tolliver's office recently was moved to the former CHA Police site at Ida B. Wells Homes at 770 E. 38th St.



Rappn' Tate "da Great" reads with youths during his recent Hip-Hop Literacy Testing 2000 Tour.

The youths received free music cassettes and hardcover copies of "Our America," written by young South Siders Lloyd Newman and LeAlan Jones.

Residents' Journal distributed some 7,000 copies of "Our America" to CHA residents.

Photo by Mary C. Johns

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African American History

A Musical Perspective of African-American History

by Thomas L. Merriweather

African American music has its roots in tribal influence and activity in Africa as well as the Southern United States. Many of the influences and much of the development of African American music took place in northern U.S. cities such as Chicago.

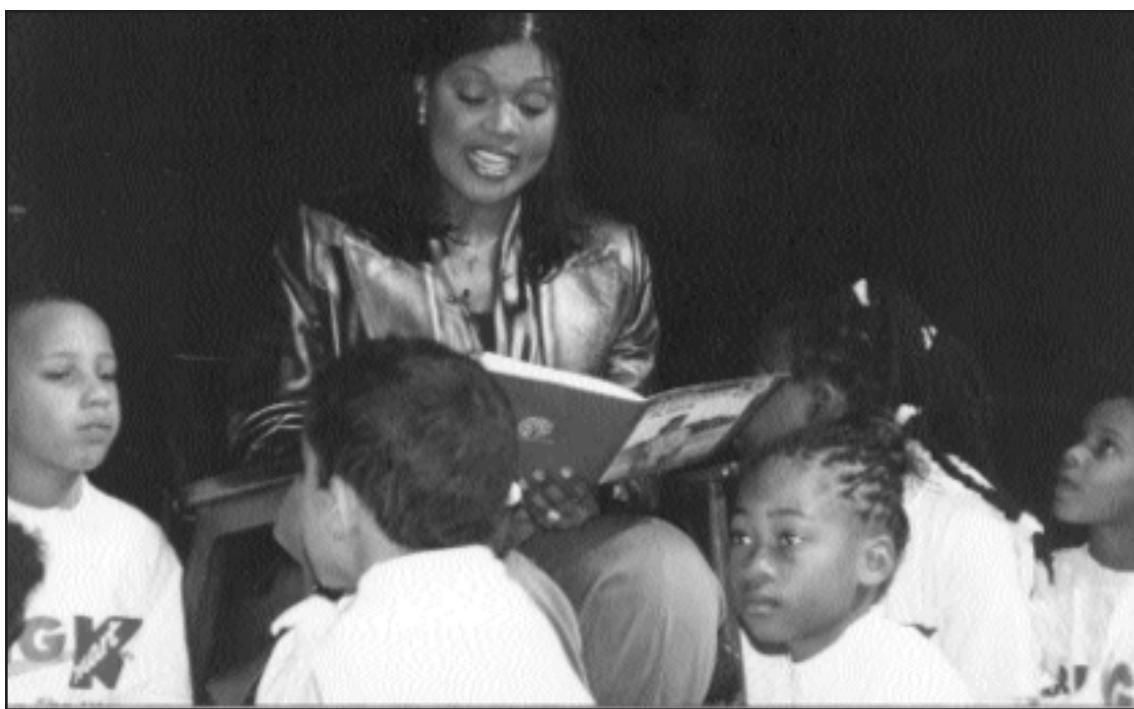
Most Americans have some familiarity with the old traditional "Negro" spirituals, the Black gospel songs, blues and jazz. All of these have emerged as distinguishing areas of African American culture from some basic forms which have their origin in Africa.

African Drums

One of the basic elements of Black music has been the use of drums and other percussive instruments. Drums have been present in communications, in celebrations, in worship and as a strong foundation to all African American music. Such drum types as conga drums, bongo drums, ton-toms, tambourines and cymbals were widely used in earlier African music. The use of drums led to other types of percussive musical instruments.

Drums have been used to convey messages over distances which might be several miles. The nature and substance of the message is communicated by a series of drumbeats or rhythm patterns transmitted from the drummer to other points over the land area.

In various celebrations which might principally have involved dancing, drums were used to articulate various rhythm



Gospel singer CeCe Winans reads a book on John Baptiste DuSable to a group of Chicago Public School children during the "Share the Word" Black History program at the DuSable Museum on Feb. 18.

Photo by Mary C. Johns

patterns to accompany the dancers or other celebrants. Often, the drummers used multiple and overlapping rhythm patterns. These overlapping drum patterns have been very important in the evolution and development of jazz.

Music in Worship

In worship, drums have been used to provide rhythm patterns for basic accompaniment. The liveliness of worship activities has contributed to the use of drums.

The "Doctor Watts" hymns are found almost exclusively in African American Baptist churches and basically have their origin in the American South. A chanting or "moaning" style is used by those who are engaged in this worship practice. The practice is often used by deacons of the church in a devotional service

to proceed the main worship service.

The term, "raising a hymn," is employed to mean that the moaning will begin with no accompanying musical instrument and with the leader selecting the pitch according to the lim-

Spirituals began to be heard in concerts and were used in worship services. Basically, the rhythmic elements of the music were more subdued than Black gospel songs but the words had strong religious messages.

Drums have been present in communications, in celebrations, in worship and as a strong foundation to all African American music.

itations of his or her own voice. It is difficult to determine when this style of worship practice was first used but it may have evolved from the slavery period and into modern church history. The practice of a clergy person introducing a hymn or worship song without an instrumental accompaniment exists today in many African American and evangelical churches. The words used in these musical pieces are drawn from scriptural passages and are used to stimulate the congregation into a meaningful worship experience.

"Doctor Watts" is credited with having published a collection of these chants in hymnal form.

Gospel

The African American gospel song has had a wider tradition and impact than the spiritual. Gospel songs have almost always used musical accompaniment. Gospel's lively rhythm patterns require the use of drums and other percussive musical instruments as well as piano, organ and other keyboard instruments. These instruments, in turn, require strongly dexterous treatment and fine musicians. Because of its flexibility in terms of musical skill, gospel has remained popular in Black culture.

Blues

The blues is one of the most popular musical forms in the United States and is most prominently accepted in Chicago. The music communicates depression in terms of its basic musical scale and its lyrics. The blues has generated a unique category of music - rhythm and blues - which has influenced the development and

The traditional "Negro Spiritual" had its origins in both European and African music. During the American slavery period, these folk songs began to appear in a work atmosphere. The Negro Spirituals eventually moved into worship settings. Through the creative efforts of some Black composers or choral arrangers, the Negro

popularity of rock and roll. Some of the most popular blues performing artists include W.C. Handy, Bessie Smith, Muddy Waters, B.B. King and T-Bone Walker.

Jazz

Jazz is a musical category with an impressive history and has been the forte of some outstanding African American musicians. Jazz has been strongly defined by all of the performing artists of color who have embraced this unique cultural art form.

The distinguishing features of jazz are its emphasis on rhythm and the liveliness of its instrumentation. Jazz uses rhythm instruments pianos, guitars, string bass and drums along with the wind instruments of trumpet or cornet, clarinet and alto or tenor saxophone. The marimba/xylophone or vibraphone also are present in many ensembles.

Jazz originated with African American musicians. The exact time jazz began is unknown but



Students of the Betty Shabazz International Charter School Drum Corps perform at the "Share the Word" program that was held Feb. 18 at the DuSable Museum.

Photo by Mary C. Johns

plantation brass bands existed as early as 1835 with minstrel troupes touring by 1840. Ragtime is the forerunner and principal component of jazz. Dixieland jazz was an outgrowth of the ragtime rhythmic elements. The harmonic structure of jazz has European musical structure and African rhythmic complexity.

The early figures in the development of jazz were in the racially mixed culture of New Orleans. Scott Joplin, James Johnson and "Fats" Waller first gained prominence. Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong then contributed greatly to this musical form. The big band era of the 1940s and beyond produced such greats as Edward "Duke" Ellington, William "Count" Basie and many others.

Chicago has been a dominant center of jazz. Real estate tycoon and author Dempsey Travis' "An Autobiography of Black Jazz," published in 1983, is a good chronicle of Chicago jazz history. Jazz also incorporates blues and speech intonations.

African American History

Curtis Mayfield, CHA's Own

by Andre Robinson

Curtis Mayfield was considered a true icon of African American culture.

Mayfield was an American original, a modern day griot who had an immeasurable, global impact on contemporary music for the last four decades. On Dec. 26, that soulful sound was taken from us at the North Fulton Regional Hospital in Roswell, Ga. Mayfield was 57.

Mayfield's early musical development occurred while his family was living in the Cabrini-Green development on the Near North Side. Born June 3, 1942, in Chicago, Mayfield's formative years were filled with music. He was singing by age 7. Mayfield was strongly influenced by a local gospel group, the Northern Jubilee Gospel Singers, whose line-up included three of his cousins, Sam, Tommy and Charles Hawkins and Jerry Butler, a future member of the Impressions and currently a Cook County commissioner.

A self-taught guitarist, Mayfield joined a local group, the Alphatones. Mayfield was inspired by his mother, who passed her love of poetry on to her son. During his early teen years, he began developing his songwriting skills.

In 1957, Butler invited a then 16-year-old Mayfield to join the Roosters, for whom he wrote and composed music. Six months later, the group met Eddie Thomas, who renamed them the Impressions and became the group's manager.

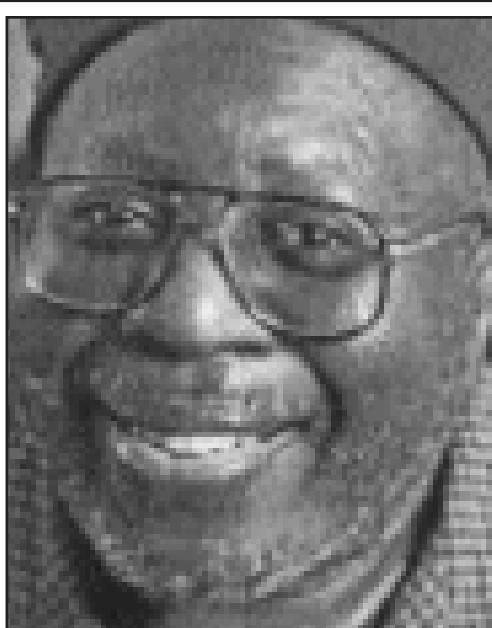
The Impressions hit the charts a year later with "For Your Precious Love" and Mayfield's professional career began in earnest. In addition to occasional gigs with the Impressions, Mayfield played guitar in Butler's touring band and gave the singer his first R&B chart topper in 1960 with "He Will Break Your Heart."

Saving money from his work with Butler, Mayfield took the Impressions to New York to cut some demos. The result was a recording contract with ABC records that lasted until 1968 and produced a run of more than 18 charted singles that positioned the group as one of the most popular R&B acts of the '60s.

Tunes like "It's All Right" and "Women Got Soul" were Mayfield-penned highlights of the group's hit-filled repertoire. "We're a Winner" quickly became a declaration of pride for African Americans along with James Brown's "Say It Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud" and Marvin Gaye's "What's Going On." These songs helped create Black pride for civil rights in a tumult-filled decade.

In addition to his work with The Impressions, Mayfield wrote and produced songs for many record labels including Okeh, VeeJay and Windy-C, which he founded in 1966. Mayfield had also established himself as a hit maker for other Chicago-based acts including another resident of Cabrini Green by way of St. Louis, Alvin Cash. Mayfield also worked with Major Lance, Walter Jackson, Billy Butler, Gene Chandler from Englewood High School and Jan Bradley.

Two years later, he launched Curton Records, with distribution through the then-newly formed Buddah Records. A new chapter in the Mayfield career began. Popular artists on the Curton label included Linda Clifford, with her hit, "Runaway Love," the Jones Girls' "You Going To Make Me Love Somebody Else," and Donnie Hathaway's "This Christmas." Following further hits with the Impressions including the classic, "Choice of Colors," Mayfield decided to begin a solo career in early 1970, initially planning to stay with the group for recording purposes only. Critical acclaim was followed by an immediate response from record buyers who embraced the message of social consciousness in Mayfield's lyrics set against an organic, groove laden backdrop of funky, heavily percussive rhythms and swirling strings. While at the Lincoln Center in New York City, Mayfield was approached by Phillip Fenty, a screenwriter, and Sig Shore, a producer, with the script of "Superfly." They invited Mayfield to score and perform the soundtrack for the film, which proved to be one of the most successful Black action films and soundtracks in history. With hit singles like



**Curtis Mayfield
1942 - 1999**

"Superfly" and "Freddie's Dead," the soundtrack went on to sell well over one million copies, received four Grammy nominations, and helped launch Curtis into superstardom.

Curton's deal with Warner Brothers ended in 1978. The following year, a new distribution pact with RSO Records yielded some new chart hits. Teaming with Curton artist Linda Clifford, he delivered the slow jam, "Between You Baby and Me," which became a Top 20 R&B hit in August 1979. That song was followed eight months later with another duet, "Love's Sweet Sensation."

Mayfield had been constantly touring in Europe and Japan, where loyal audiences had been supporting him as a recording artist and performer from his earliest years with the Impressions. Mayfield also appeared at occasional U.S. dates as part of an Impressions reunion tour that featured members of the group, including Jerry Butler. In 1989, Mayfield contributed to the soundtrack of the movie, "I'm Going Git You Sucka." The

Ironically, it took the tragedy to finally bring Mayfield industry-wide recognition for his unparalleled contribution to the world of contemporary music. In the spring of 1994, superstars like Whitney Houston, Elton John, the Isley Brothers and Aretha Franklin recorded Mayfield compositions for a special salute, "All Men are Brothers: A Tribute to Curtis Mayfield."

Mayfield was a two-time inductee to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, recognized in 1991 as a member of the Impressions and again in 1999 as a solo artist. On Feb. 12, 1999, the Chicago Housing Authority paid tribute to its native son by announcing the Curtis Mayfield Technology Learning Center in Cabrini-Green. In a 1996 interview with the Associated Press, Mayfield said he was happy his songs had touched so many people.

"I wrote them for myself," he said. "Being a young Black man, observing and sensing the need for race equality and women's rights, I

Ironically, it took the tragedy to finally bring Mayfield industry-wide recognition for his unparalleled contribution to the world of contemporary music.

By now established as a hit maker in his own right, Mayfield continued to record soundtracks for other movies: "Claudine," featuring Gladys Knight and the Pips, Aretha Franklin from the movie "Sparkle" and the Staple Singers for the "Let's Do It Again" soundtrack. In 1977, Mayfield stepped to the front of the cameras for a role in the dramatic movie, "Short Eyes," which was about a child molester in prison. Mayfield also contributed to the soundtrack which included the hit, "Do Do Wap is Strong in Here," still considered one of his best recordings from the late '70s.

following year, he worked on tunes for another movie, "The Return of Superfly," as well as completing a second Ichiban-distributed Curton album, "Take it to the Streets," which contained the standout tracks, "Homeless," and "Do Be Down," included as the final track on the compilation, "People Get Ready!"

A life changing tragedy struck in August 1990. While Mayfield performed at an outdoor concert in Brooklyn, high winds dislodged a lighting rig, which collapsed on him. The damage to his spine left Mayfield a quadriplegic.

wrote about what was important to me."

At the time of his death, Mayfield lived in Atlanta with his wife and family. Mayfield's widow, Altheida said, "I lost my husband, the father of our children, my best friend and my soul mate. Thank God his music and his legacy will live far beyond today."

Mayfield's soul-filled music remains timeless. He is a soul survivor whose courage and strength continue to be an inspiration to others. He was a peaceful warrior and truly a gentle giant.

Amen!

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African American History My Man Mister Jones

by John "Popcorn" Sampson

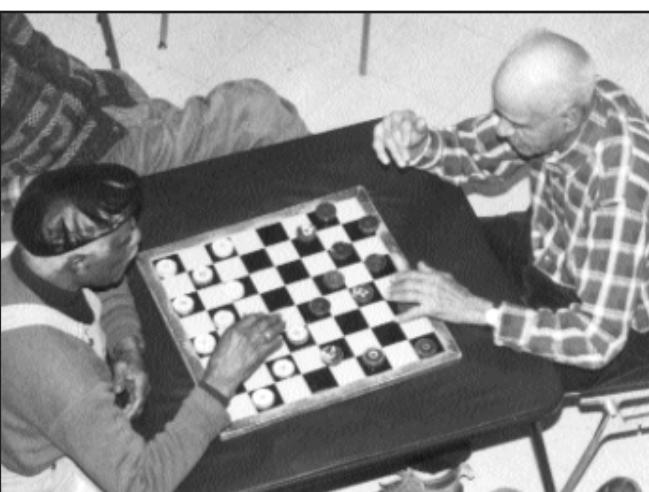
As RJ proudly pays homage to the African American people, a people who have not only made a praiseworthy contribution to America but to the world, I would like to proudly point the finger at an African American who I consider to be deserving of the utmost veneration and reverence.

He is a man that is without a doubt a brother to his people - and not merely during the month of February, the shortest month of the year and the time when the glacial winds of winter makes cowards of all those who would dare venture beyond the inner door.

Now come along with me to the Atlas Center, 1767 E. 79th St., and let me introduce you to Thomas E. Jones Jr., the southeast regional director for the Chicago Department on Aging. Jones' area, which includes much of the South Side, includes approximately 100,000 people 60 years and older. The Department on Aging is responsible for providing information, nutritional and recreational services for all of those individuals.

There are 18 nutritional sites throughout the southeast region and the Atlas Center makes arrangements with accountants to aid the seniors in the area. It also provides a life enrichment program to take their people out on trips to theatres, restaurants, field trips, ball games and educational seminars.

Between 300 and 400 seniors come to the



Seniors at ease playing chess at the Atlas Center.

Photo by John "Popcorn" Sampson

center daily for various reasons: for the ceramics class, the computer class, and also the cards, checkers and pool games going on in the basement seven days a week. Sunday is the one day that meals are not served.

Jones has been an employee for the Chicago Department on Aging for 17 years. At first, Jones was the department's community affairs care placement coordinator, responsible for follow-up on former mental health patients who were placed in nursing homes throughout Illinois. Before coming to the Atlas Center, Jones was the director of the Chicago Department on Aging Central West Center, 2102 W Ogden Ave. He has worked as the director of Atlas Center for 13 of those 17 years. At the Atlas Center, Jones supervises 14 employees and 60 volunteers serving meals and taking care of the needs of seniors. Jones, 59, is a native of Gary, Ind., and holds university degrees in psychology and social science. Jones is a devout United Methodist and a member of the United Methodist Church on 86th Street and Creiger

Avenue. Though Jones works with retired folks every day, when I asked him if he was looking forward to the time when he would retire, he looked me in the eye and said, "No, Popcorn. I have been here a long time and there are a lot of things that still need to be done. So many people need help and I do believe that the Good Lord has placed me here to do all that I can. And that's what I want most to do. I want to do all that I can for as long as I can."

During my visit to the Atlas Center, I questioned some of the volunteers as to what it was like to work under Jones. I first spoke with Catherine Smith, 73, a South Sider and a volunteer that works in the gift shop at the Atlas Center. "I've been working here almost 10 years and I honestly don't think there's a better boss or a nicer person in the city of Chicago to work for than Mr. Jones," she said. "He is earnestly concerned about the welfare of not only the men and women that work there but also the seniors that comes here. Mr. Jones is always willing and ready to do all that he can for anyone and everybody loves him. He's such an intelligent man."

Johnny Baker, 70, also works in the gift shop three days a week as a volunteer. Also a South Sider, Baker said of Jones, "He treats me well. I think he's a very good director." This man is a man for us all. It would be spectacular if there were more of the same. Stay up and take care. I'm Popcorn.



Thomas E. Jones Jr., southeast regional director for the Chicago Department on Aging.

Photo/John "Popcorn" Sampson



A senior resident enjoying a meal at the Atlas Center, 1767 E. 79th St.

Photo/John "Popcorn" Sampson

Special Health Section

Men's Health

by Dr. Lester Wright
Provident Hospital

Did you know that most common diseases - high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, AIDS, and prostate cancer - affect Black men more often and cause more death, disease and disability among Black men than women and men of other races?

Ninety five to 98 percent of all people with the above diseases could have avoided them by eating a proper diet - elimi-

nating greasy, salty and sugary foods - and by avoiding alcohol, tobacco, drugs and irresponsible sexual practices - unprotected sex and multiple sexual partners.

Since you have complete control over what you put into your body and whether or not to engage in irresponsible sexual practices, you may also have complete control over how healthy you are, how long you live and how you feel and function while you are alive.

Your body has a remarkable self-healing powers but you must do the following in order to help it do its job, which is to make you feel better and function better:

Provide your body with the necessary foods, at least 4 servings of fruit and vegetables a day. Avoid alcohol, tobacco and drugs, all of which damage the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain, stomach, circulation and nerves.

Eat less beef and pork and more baked fish and skinless baked chicken or turkey.

Whenever you get the urge to eat sweets like cookies, candy, donuts and ice cream, eat a piece of fruit instead. Exercise regularly, at least 4 days a week for ½ hour each time. People who exercise regularly feel better and live longer.

Drink plenty of bottled water every day. Tap water contains too many chemicals.

You can greatly reduce your chances of catching HIV by using condoms always and having only one sex partner in your life.

To receive free screening for high blood pressure, diabetes, prostate cancer and HIV, come to the annual Men's Health Fair at Provident Hospital, 500 E. 51st St., on Saturday, March 18 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

KidCare Insurance

Did you know that Illinois has an insurance program specifically designed for kids and moms to be?

Thousands of children in Chicago wake up each day with inadequate or no health insurance coverage. As a result, many of these kids do not receive essential health care.

KidCare is a federally-funded health insurance program administered by the State of Illinois which provides low- or no-cost health insurance to children and pregnant women.

KidCare covers routine medical and dental check-ups, specialty medical services, hospital stays, emergency room visits, prescription medication costs and mental health and substance abuse services. KidCare is designed to ensure that Illinois children have access to health care.

KidCare has several plans which take into account a family's income level and ability to contribute to health insurance costs.

KidCare Assist Plan

The Kid Care Assist Plan is designed for families at the lowest income qualification levels and will pay for their children's health care with no co-payments or premiums.

Kid Share Plan

KidCare Share also pays for children's health care with the family sharing in some of

the costs in the form of a low co-payment for doctor's visits and prescription medications. Immunizations and well-child care, however, do not require co-payments.

KidCare Premium Plan

KidCare Premium is for families who have a greater ability to afford health insurance. Families pay a low monthly premium in addition to a co-payment for each doctor, clinic or hospital visit and for prescription costs. As with the Share Plan, immunizations and well-child care do not require co-payments.

KidCare Moms and Babies Plan

The KidCare Moms and Babies Plan covers health care services throughout pregnancy and the first year of the baby's life, including prenatal visits, delivery services, well-baby

care and immunizations.

There are no premiums or co-payments in the Moms and Babies Plan. You can apply for KidCare coverage at many different locations, including all Chicago Department of Public Health clinics and WIC sites. You may also call the State of Illinois directly and request an application.

Once your application is approved, your child's insurance coverage will usually begin within 15-45 days. Your child cannot be turned down for KidCare insurance due to a pre-existing condition, disability or chronic illness.

If you have any questions about KidCare or if you want to request an application, you can call the KidCare toll free number at 1-800-226-0768. You may also visit the nearest Chicago Department of Public Health clinic. To find the clinic closest to you, call 312-747-9864.

Welfare to Work: People in Transition

Substance Abuse Struggles

by Wateka Kleinpeter

Despite the strong economy, job-seekers with an alcohol and/or substance abuse problem are having difficulty moving from welfare to work.

On a recent morning at an Illinois Department of Human Services office in the Oakland neighborhood, I interviewed Robert Henderson, a substance abuse counselor. During my interview with Henderson, a caseworker knocked on the door and asked Henderson about his availability that day.

The caseworker said she had a client outside who needed Henderson's services. If the client didn't go see Henderson that day, the caseworker said she would cancel her case and the client ultimately could lose her benefits.

Henderson told me that the caseworker obviously suspected or recognized a problem. It could have been the person's appearance, the smell of alcohol or unusual behavior.

Many people being told to move from welfare to work are not immediately prepared for the job market. In addition to a lack of education or transportation or day

care, many welfare recipients are unable to get a job because they cannot pass a drug test.

Substance abusers who cannot meet the minimum requirements to stay in welfare to work programs can lose their benefits for non-compliance.

Substance abusers often experience serious physical problems – including withdrawal symptoms, irregular sleep patterns and psychological disorders – that may hamper their ability to work or look for work.

Drug counselors point out that many substance abusers also have mental illnesses which further complicate their search for a job.

When the push to move people from welfare to work started, Illinois Department of Human Services officials realized large numbers of their clients had substance abuse problems. DHS started placing substance abuse counselors at their welfare to work sites.

Henderson, a counselor for the Human Resources Development Institute (HRDI), works full-time at the Oakland office with the caseworkers to provide information and referrals to welfare recipients who may have substance abuse problems. Many clients do not immediately admit they have a substance abuse problem. Henderson refers clients to treatment centers for in-house detox, out-patient treatment centers, anger management courses as well as pre-natal care.

Henderson makes his initial presentation to clients at their orientation. Caseworkers can refer clients to Henderson or the clients can directly ask to speak with him.

Henderson cannot stop the time limit for benefits. The substance abuser has to address the issue of obtaining sobriety while still completing the mandatory

requirements for DHS because the clock is still going.

Henderson said that many times a person who can't find a job might sit around and drink or smoke marijuana. Even if the person has not used an illegal substance in a while or used substances only occasionally, traces of the substance can be found in their bloodstream or hair samples. A positive result on a drug test stops the job process. Current drug testing can pick up commercial products that people buy to fool an employer, Henderson said.

Henderson said a lack of child care and the lifestyles of many substance abusers often hinder their ability to keep appointments. If the clients don't keep their appointments, the clients do not receive badly needed services and counseling they need to make successful transitions to employment.

Criminal Activity

Substance abuse also frequently leads to criminal activity, which further complicates the search for work. Potential employers often turn away applicants with felony convictions on their records.

In 1998, 27 percent of the women in state prison and 21 percent of male inmates were there for drug-related crimes, according to the U.S. Department of Justice. A higher number of inmates were using substances when they committed the crimes of which they were convicted.

When substance abuse leads to criminal activity, it can complicate the job search. This situation has led organizations like the Safer Foundation, which works with people in the criminal justice system, to create special welfare to work programs. Regina Henderson, the director of Safer's welfare-to-work programs, said all of Safer's programs have a thorough

intake process to reveal problems such as substance abuse. Participants are referred to various agencies for treatment.

Henderson said Safer specializes in placing ex-offenders in jobs but does not recommend anyone for a job until they are ready. Substance abuse is a major component of her clients' criminal history and many of the clients continue to have substance abuse problems when they come in to Safer's programs. As a result of the strict screening process, Henderson said they have more jobs than they have clients. Some welfare recipients' efforts to get a job are hampered because they live with a substance abuser.

Approximately one year ago, the Illinois Department of Human Services asked Safer to create a welfare to work program to address the issues of spouses, parents or significant others.

The program is open to welfare recipients and their significant others who have children in common. Henderson said the program aims to bring the significant others through the same screening and referral procedures to treat an entire family. The program is designed to stabilize the family environment.

A Success Story?

Henderson does have some success stories when it comes to individuals overcoming substance abuse issues. Henderson mentioned a woman who fought a drug addiction for eight years and finally beat it. She now has a \$13 an hour job at a big company and is doing quite well.

Henderson said substance abusers face the two-fold challenge of maintaining their status in welfare to work programs and maintaining sobriety.

"No one can do it for them (substance abusers). They have to do it themselves," Henderson said.

Don't Believe the Hype: A Recovery Story

by Bobby Watkins

As a Black male living in Chicago Public Housing, I was sitting around the other day thinking about Black History Month. Our youths are often given assignments in school during this month to either write a poem or something about their heritage or some Black person who has become a role model for them.

But most often, the people who our young people write about are not people from the developments in which they live. Usually, all we hear about Black males living in CHA are negative things. So most of these young people write about past civil rights leaders or sports figures or even rappers.

But as I was turning the cable television channels, I saw a young man from Robert Taylor Homes who accomplished what some people would describe as a "total 360" change while still living in public housing.

I would like to hear, read and see more positive things like that story about people who try and make a difference in the community. I would like to commend Arlander Adamson, a young man who's been a resident of Robert Taylor Homes for 35 years.

A former student of Du Sable High School, Adamson left school but went back for his GED. After a bout with

drugs and alcohol, now he's a resident business owner of A&D Constructors Inc., a fence contractor.

Adamson is also a board member of the Paternal Involvement Project (PIP) and a deacon of Trinity United Church of Christ

Adamson has worked with several of the construction projects in CHA, giving other residents a chance to have a job. We do have good men in CHA who do make a difference.

Sobriety and Depression

I recently talked with a young male CHA resident I will call D. He came into the Local Advisory Council office to see if we could refer him to any jobs.

This is D's second year working in the state Earnfare program. He is one of the few that has worked for us and always been on time, completes his work and has no problem doing what he is assigned to do. We also helped him to find work last summer on a food truck. But that was just a summer job.

He looked down other avenues with no luck and wants to know just how a program can help a person when you can't get work. It only makes some people get depressed and turn back to drugs or alcohol.

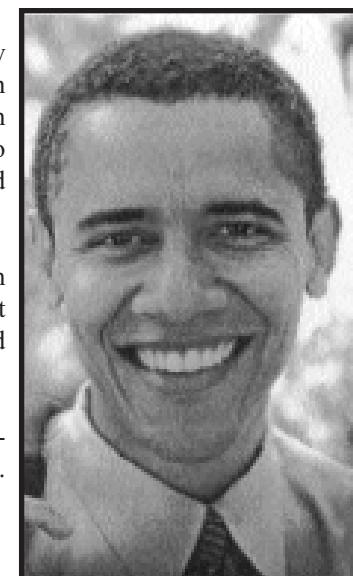
Depression is a major factor in the daily struggle to maintain sobriety. This is something D said he really wants to stay away from. But where is the help he needs?

Lathrop News

As we talk of resident-owned businesses, a special thanks to Titus Kirby and his company, Exodus Community Development Corporation, for the ham baskets they gave away at Christmas.

There will be a vegetable produce give-away, compliments of the Chicago Food Depository and Raul Valez, our community specialist.

For more information, contact me, Bobby Watkins, at the Lathrop LAC office at (312) 791-8740.



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CHA's Korean-Americans

by Timothy Ohr

Korean American senior citizens tend to stay within their own community due to their limited knowledge of English.

Almost all of these senior citizens immigrated to the U.S. through a petition filed by their children or siblings who have settled in the U.S. To minimize the inconveniences of living in the U.S., with which they are not very familiar, many Korean Americans move to CHA apartments hoping that they can better enjoy the latter part of their lives.

Even if they do not speak English at all, they can communicate with other Korean Americans or groups in this community using the Korean language. They can rely

There are individuals in their 70s and 80s who attend computer and calligraphy classes as well as English classes at the Korean American Senior Service Center.

on each other for mutual assistance and support that enable these senior citizens to better enjoy their lives.

A majority of these senior citizens say their children live in suburbs where Korean Americans to whom they can talk are rare. While the generation gap with their children may be one of the reasons Korean American senior citizens centralize in a localized community, a more prominent reason is that it is physically difficult for them to get around. They move to CHA apartments to seek the company of other Korean Americans.

Unlike their children or siblings who were educated in the U.S., their inability to speak the language has limited them from leading a normal social life in the U.S. However, within the Korean American community, they seem to have found the happiness and purpose as members of a society in the U.S. **RJ** has followed their daily lives, the details of which are described below.

Korean American Lifestyles

More than 600 Korean American households reside on the lakefront area of northern Chicago. Two senior citizen buildings have more than 100 households. Three apartment buildings accommodate more than 70 Korean American residences each and another apartment building accommodates approximately 40 residences.

Most of these buildings have their own Korean associations that convene once a month for exchange of various supports and services. During the year, these associations plan and conduct visits for fellow members that are hospitalized and organize translation services, holiday banquets and picnics. The neighborhood organizations also provide birthday parties for the members. In these parties, the members exchange food and gifts. Sometimes, a party hosted by a church is thrown for all residents of the same building association.

During warm seasons, residents gather for early morning exercises held around 6 a.m. on the lake shore at Wilson Park. The event starts with prayers. The exercise routine is a series of simple physical movements they learned when they were schoolchildren and does not require sophisticated or structured techniques. Sometimes, it is nothing more than just yelling out loud as if to confirm the good working conditions of their respiratory systems.

After the exercise, they head to a nearby McDonald's to enjoy a cup of coffee on senior citizen discount and conversations with others.

Until recently, some of the seniors participated in a

gardening project on a vacant lot near their building. Starting in the early spring, they worked the soil, sowed seeds, weeded and watered. While the work was not easy for them, they enjoyed the activity that started off their days.

In a rather unfortunate incident, a landowner plowed over the seniors' garden with a bulldozer. However, the seniors did not blame the landowner. They explained they had not asked for the landowner's permission before they started gardening on the lot.

The seniors nevertheless miss the benefits of the gardening. One woman said that Korean peppers can be quite expensive in markets but she can grow her own vegetables. She said that not only can she and her family have fresh vegetables by gardening, she can also save the money spent on buying vegetables.

The seniors said they would appreciate it if the Chicago Housing Authority could help them find a new gardening location or make other arrangements. In a CHA senior building at 5040 N. Kenmore, there are more than 60 Korean American households. However, none of the residents speaks English and some complained they suffer all different types of inconveniences because they speak only Korean.

This reporter met an 80-year old man who attends English classes offered by the Korean American Senior

Service Center so he can learn English. There are individuals in their 70s and 80s who attend computer and calligraphy classes as well as English classes at the Korean American Senior Service Center. The seniors said they learn these things as their hobbies. This reporter visited the center - located in the middle of Korean-American community - and interviewed Pastor Suk-Kab Yun, who oversees the center's operations. Yun said the center provides educational programs, assistance with immigration and naturalization services and social security, and various household assistance to Korean senior citizens. He stressed the diversity of the services provided by the center as well as its emphasis on the volunteer services.

During the visit to the center, this reporter noticed the large number of senior citizens attending an English class, which packed four classrooms. More than 100 students attend English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and citizenship-interview preparation classes each week. There are as many as 60 staff members and social workers in the center. Yun said the number of staff members and social workers has been increasing due to the seniors' increasing needs. However, he added that the center recently has been struggling financially. Another pastor mentioned that most of these senior citizens are quite devoted to their church. While there are a few Buddhists among CHA's Korean seniors, most of them are Christians and more than 70 percent of them attend church. Many of them have enjoyed pilgrimages to sacred places or missionary visits through trips arranged by their children.

This reporter asked one woman how she paid for her travel expenses. She replied that her three children paid for her trip. She also said that she gets allowances from her children and that she contributes to church collection from those allowances.

The residents of the Clark and Argyle apartments can benefit from visits by Korean doctors in the building as well as visits to



Part of the CHA Korean residents' lifestyle is to gather together daily and begin the day with morning exercises in the park.

Photo by Timothy Ohr

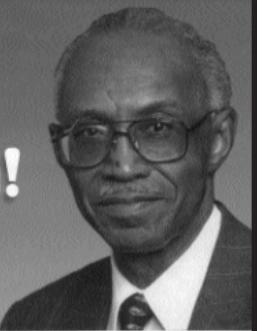
clinics located within the building. When a hospital stay is required, a nurse accompanies the patient to the hospital and takes care of all administrative procedures.

For recreation, the Korean American seniors rent video tapes from a store that rents Korean television programs and films. They also play Jang-Gi, a Korean version of chess, or Hwa-Tu, a Korean card game, to fill their days. They say these recreational activities save them from boredom. This reporter noticed that when they play Jang-Gi, which is a game for two, several people stand around the players to give advice on game strategy, thereby allowing more than two people to actually enjoy the game.

(Continued on Page 17)

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Bill Cousins' long career in public service has been devoted to the pursuit of justice for all under the law. Today he's a highly honored judge with 23 years of distinguished Judicial service: 16 on the Circuit Court and 7 on the Illinois Appellate Court. For a full decade earlier, he was an outspoken, independent Alderman, leading the fight for human rights, better schools, consumers and the elderly. He was Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Illinois Appellate Court, 1st District; Chairman of both the Illinois Judicial Council and the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association.

He was born in Mississippi. His family moved to Chicago when he was 11. He went on to graduate from DuSable High School, the University of Illinois then Harvard Law School. He is a combat veteran of the Korean War and retired from the U.S. Army Reserve Corps as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Judge Advocate General (JAG) Corps. He served as an Assistant State's Attorney and was in private practice for 15 years. He has been evaluated "Highly Qualified" by the Chicago Bar Association, and "Highly Recommended" by the Women's Bar Association of Illinois.

Endorsers include: Region 4, UAW (Paul Korman), IVI-IPO, Personal PAC, Sheriff's Hispanic Organization United Together, The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and many Democratic Organizations.

PUNCH NO. 168



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Paid for by Cousins for Supreme Court Justice

Justice William Cousins Jr. Democrat for Illinois Supreme Cour

Resident

Leaders: Past and Present

by Karen Owens

A motto from one of the 50 states is "Crescit eundo" - it grows as it goes. This is a good term to describe the beginnings of tenant councils.

When public housing units were first built, residents organized themselves into councils with input from management and other social service agencies. The councils

The councils were designed to work on problems and solutions for life within the communities.

were designed to work on problems and solutions for life within the communities.

The activities with which the councils were involved during their early years paved the way for what are now known as the Local Advisory Councils (LACs) and the Central Advisory Council (CAC). The CAC is comprised of LAC presidents and has been around since 1971. The "Chicago Housing Authority Resident's Handbook" reads, "The LAC's membership consists of elected representatives from building area or block councils.

"They meet regularly to discuss development problems and make recommendations to the manager of their

(Continued from page 16)

Some Concerns

The most prominent inconvenience suffered by the seniors is communication with the building management. The seniors are eagerly awaiting a Korean manager to oversee the apartment buildings where many Korean Americans live. Almost none of the Korean American residents residing in these apartment buildings speak fluent English and therefore, they often feel as if they have a disability.

A total of 260 Korean American households reside in buildings at 4945 N. Sheridan Road and 4645 N. Sheridan Road. Considering the high number of Korean-American residents there, the management company hires interpreters and Korean-speaking social workers to work the morning and afternoon shifts. While these measures provide great help, no such measures have been implemented in the buildings' core management.

Moreover, all notices from CHA are written in English. The seniors wish that important notices would include a Korean translation, as they see is the case with Spanish language.

Most of the Korean American seniors cannot distinguish between regular advertisements - so-called junk mail - and important notices. Many of the seniors collect all mail in a box so their children can go through the items when they visit. The seniors also say that they are hesitant to attend resident meetings and gatherings for the Local Advisory Council and other activities because of their inability to

development." The CAC "reviews CHA's annual operating and modernization budgets and makes recommendations. CAC works closely with the authority on a wide variety of problems."

The ABLA Council's History

Residents serve the LACs as presidents, vice presidents and building and area representatives, among other posts. Many long-term residents recently recalled their involvement in the LACs. "I joined the council to better myself and offer help to my neighbors," said one former Grace Abbott high-rise resident. During her years at Grace Abbott, she held the position of vice president of her building.

A former Robert Brooks vice president remembers that the LAC and CHA sponsored arts and crafts shows to showcase ABLA's many talented and creative residents. She also remembers a talk

'50s and early '60s who once judged one of ABLA's millinery (hat) shows.

"I made the items in one of the many sewing classes that were established through the efforts of the LAC," this resident recalled.

L. Banyard, who lived in Robert Brooks Homes from 1955 to 1975, volunteered with the LAC and helped out wherever needed. "I remember when the incinerators closed in the rowhouses (in 1972). The LACs were instrumental in the distribution of garbage bags to the residents to dispose of their refuse," Banyard said.

Another resident remembered the LACs in their function as building representatives.

speak English. The seniors said the real-time interpretation used in UN meetings would be an ideal communication tool for them.

Another concern the seniors have is that some Korean foods - mainly bean paste casserole or Kim-Chee (pickled cabbage) casserole - produce pungent smells during cooking. The Korean American residents often stop themselves from cooking these foods because they worry that the smell may bother their neighbors.

One woman added, "What about the smell that comes from broiling mackerel?" referring to another food often enjoyed by Korean Americans.

These concerns arise because the apartment buildings lack sufficient ventilation systems. They say that the emergency exit doors on hallways are always ajar to let in

"The meetings always kept us informed of the various programs. Tenant patrol, lead screening, summer youth employment, adult employment, etc.," she said. "They were a very big help to me and my family."

Currently, the ABLA LAC under President Deverra Beverly along with other agencies were able to get a relocation building in which Robert Brooks residents will reside until their apartments are rehabbed. Onlookers now refer to the rehabbed units as the "New Brooks."

Final

Each issue of **RJ** will include the history of some of the developments and their LACs. These articles will offer a little insight into what was accomplished at each development and at each LAC.

air despite the safety and security concerns. The seniors requested that the Chicago Housing Authority arrange proper ventilation systems to enable them to cook the foods they enjoy.

A Note of Appreciation

It is true that these senior citizens often are limited in their social activities due to the lack of knowledge of English and differences in cultural awareness. Nevertheless, they are grateful for the government's coverage on the basic means of life - namely food, clothing and housing. Although many things can be inconvenient to them, they seem to appreciate that their children are leading happy lives in a country they love and that they can be near their children.

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Altgeld Gardens News

by Sharon Fornizy

Hello: This is Sharon Forinzy again. Please give me information on what is going on in Altgeld Gardens. Please call me at (773) 535-5223 or page me at (773) 201-7678.



Obituaries

The Altgeld Gardens community's deepest sympathies go out to the families of Mrs. Carol Parker and others who have lost loved ones.

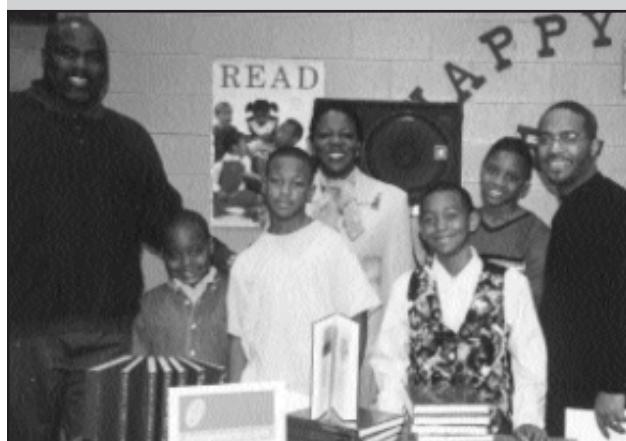
Sickness

We wish a speedy recovery to Carol Speckman, grandmother of Kristie Rios, and to Lucille Brownlow and James Weston Sr.

God bless and keep you in his care.

Security Concerns

Many residents of Altgeld Gardens are not satisfied with the "Blue and White" police officers - the Chicago Police Department. They prefer the former CHA Police Department. To begin with, many residents interviewed said the CHAPD officers were always visible and active in the community.



Britannica.Com Inc. Executive Director Kenneth C. Speller (back row, from left) with Lula M. Ford, CPS/CHA liaison, "Reading with Uncle Phillip Excellence Reading Contract" winners Janolby Young Back, 6th grade, Lavelle Smith, 2nd grade, Jonathan Lewis, 5th grade, William Miller, 6th grade, and Arba Houlben, Britannica.com executive, at Beethoven Elementary School Feb. 25.

Photo by Mary C. Johns

"It seems as though the CPD are only writing tickets and towing cars in front of the residents' homes and apartments," said one resident.

The officials of the Altgeld Clinic said they are pleased that the community "is still being served and protected by the police force." The stores in the community said they didn't care which department serves them as long as when they need help, someone responds.

Aldridge School eighth-grader Julius Sherman placed second in this year's Region 6 Science Fair.

But Local Block Captain Sharon Williams said during an interview at the Local Advisory Council office, "I am speaking on the CHA Police Department in the community.

"They were able to change and get things done in the community. I wish we could get them back. Blue and whites are sitting around and that is not enough. Unfortunately, two squad cars are not enough for this community. We need more visible protection. We would like to see both CPD and CHA working together."

Aldridge School News

Among 7th and 8th graders at Aldridge School, Jeanette Figures in Juanita Smith's class was a Region 6 Science Fair 1st place winner. Figures will go to the City Science Fair in March. The project was titled, "The Effect of Charcoal on Water Filtration." Eighth grader Julius Sherman came in 2nd place. His project was called, "The Effect of Friction on an Inclined Plane."

For Black History Month, Aldridge School had a pot luck and other events such as the Illinois School Education Act (ISEA) nationwide program for all the parents in the community.

The cheer-leading competition will start in March 2000. Head coach Fatimah Khan will handle the varsity squad while LaWanda Williams will handle the junior varsity squad and Jama Cottrell will handle the pee wee squad.

The Aldridge Basketball boys coach is Michael Hatcher and the girls coach is Wayne Dean.

The Aldridge Spelling Bee winners are Tadanio Hall and the alternate is Robert Nuttall. Hall competed at the Region 6 Spelling

Bee in the middle of February.

To All Students

Good luck to all the public school students who will be taking the ISAT test. Try your best to be successful.

ELECT Attorney Paula M.

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- Speaker, Youth Motivation Program, Chicago Public Schools
- Assisted with the Genesis Housing Development Program
- Assisted in Outreach Programs for Senior Citizens
- Member: Rainbow Push, Chicago Urban League, NAACP, Cook County Bar Assn., Illinois State Bar Assn., Black Women Lawyers Assn., Chicago Bar Assn., Womens' Bar Assn.

PRIMARY ELECTION - MARCH 21, 2000

PUNCH # 253

Paid for by Citizens to Elect Paula M. Lingo

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Youth Issues



Drops Outs

by Ramsey Pahrue

I am seeing a lot of people who cannot read or write, cannot spell or don't know how to count their money. They also cannot get a job because they do not have the education for it.

I believe a lot of this is because some people have dropped out of school. Many do not have a place to live because their parents have kicked them out of the house because they have stopped going to school. I think this is a serious problem and we need to try to help them.

There are many reasons why people drop out of school. Some of the reasons I feel people drop out of school are because some people don't feel good about themselves and because they think their parents, teachers and the counselors do not care about them or what they are doing in school.

Linda (not her real name) quit school in 1985 when she was 17. She is now 32 and has five children. When I asked her why she dropped out, she said, "I had one kid and I was pregnant with another one. I was depressed so I gave up."

I think family problems like arguments, drinking and

using drugs in the house make some people drop out. Linda was nine when her mother died and left her as an only child. She had to live with her stepfather but he was an alcoholic and a drug addict.

"It was stressful because he used to watch my son while I was in school and I used to be worried about my

"Just having someone to talk to or child care and good living conditions could help."

- Linda

son. I had to raise my children so I had to stay at home to make sure they were OK."

Some also drop out because they want to join a gang and due to peer pressure. They do not want to go to school because they are under pressure to hang out with friends. Linda said that her boyfriend at the time was a big part of her dropping out.

"He was an individual who was real jealous and abusive. Some mornings, I was getting ready to go to school and he would stop me from going physically. He would beat me up. He said I was lying. I was going to meet some

man. He was a drop-out himself."

Some drop out because they have failed. They think, "I can't do it," so they just drop out.

Half of the people who drop out cannot get a job. They need money but they cannot get it because they do not have an education. I looked up some statistics on the Internet. According to U.S. Department of Labor, 43 percent of dropouts are unemployed.

Linda said it right, "There were many jobs that I could have had, good jobs, but I did not have my diploma."

I think we should try to help the drop outs because I do not want to see them get cheated out of their money and treated badly. Some of them can get into drug free programs. We can also help girls with children find babysitting.

Linda said, "If I had guidance or support, it would have helped me. Just having someone to talk to or child care and good living conditions could help."

If you feel like you are going drop out, you may not want to do it. Stay in school and get a good job. What Linda said sounded good to me: "I encourage young people to stay in school. If you do not have a diploma, people will turn you around. Stay in school. School is important." I agree with her.

Is 'Anti-Gang' Anti-Youth?

by Quintana Woodridge

Mayor Richard M. Daley recently introduced the new Anti-Gang Loitering Ordinance to the public. This law is

to clear gang members off the corners and out of selected areas in the city.

The mayor's move caused problems among innocent youth, many of whom feel police officers will use this law to justify abuse. The law gives officers authority to use

Commentary

whatever means to clear the groups if the groups don't split up as fast as the officers think they should.

The mayor has a good point: "Get the gang members off the street." But he does not know who they are. The mayor said gang members will be picked out by the way they dress.

But clothes have nothing to do with a youth being in a gang or the area where they are standing. A lot of the areas where the law will be used are in African American and Latino communities. This is another way of criminalizing youth instead of helping through 100 percent positive development.

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Straight From the Heart

by Amy Green

Last week, I was thinking about what it takes to be in a romantic relationship. I was so angry because at the time, my relationship was drastically changing. We stopped communicating. I began to ask myself, "Do you have to put up with other people's stuff to have a relationship?"

So I set out on a mission to see what love meant to other teenagers to see if they were feeling what I was feeling at the time. Here are their answers to my question, "What does love mean to you?"

"Love consists of a lot of things. But the major points are: trust, communication, caring for that one particular person. Love is a powerful feeling that one person can feel. That helps one to forgive and forget during trouble that has occurred." - Jackie Igartua, 16

"To me, love is giving what you have and asking for nothing in return. It is making sure the one you love comes before you. Love is doing anything you can to make someone's life a little easier and more

meaningful. It is also not being afraid of taking chances to gain someone's love in return." - Noberto Nieves, 18

"Love is when the rest of the world disappears and being with that person feels like a dream." - Josie Birman, 17

"Love is a powerful word. People have their own opinion of what love is. But to me, it's a feeling of spiritual and physical satisfaction." - DeWayne Brown, 18

"Love is just a word. People use the word 'Love' to get what they feel they need.

ship and should be treated with complete respect." - Nicole Jones, 17

"Love is not like a Swallow
Only returning once a year
Love is not like winter
Leaving you cold and lonely
Love is Always
Never just sun-up or just sundown
Always there like the stars
Or the wind or the Holy Spirit
There even though you cannot see it."
- Conway Figueroa, 17

"Love is caring and respecting for the other person. It's to be there for him/her

"Guys tend to use the word to describe what they feel in their pants. Girls use it when they get attention that they're not used to"
- Tanja Matic, 18

Guys tend to use the word to describe what they feel in their pants. Girls use it when they get attention that they're not used to"
- Tanja Matic, 18

"Love is a feeling of knowing that the person you are with is precious. It's knowing that the feelings that you have for them are sincere and true." - Hafeez Sarumi, 17

"To me, love means friendship, partner-

whenever they're feeling bad. To love is to be there in times of happiness and sadness. To love is to get chills going through your body whenever you hear your mate's voice. To love is to know how to forgive your mate, even though you're mad. "Anyone can feel and think they're in love but the only people that are in love are people who can't forget about that person ever and are depressed until they hear that person's voice or see their happy expression

legal age to buy liquor for a minor] and we just hang out at someone's house. If we're lucky, someone will have marijuana. Of course, their parents won't be home.

"It's fun. You feel like you're not even yourself for a while. It relaxes you because you feel like you're just there and nothing phases you." - Bill, 16

"I'd rather drink than smoke. When I drink, I get happy. When I smoke, I get drowsy. When I do it, it's only when I'm with other people. I guess if you have noth-

ing better to do, you're most likely to be influenced," She laughed.
"I guess you can call it peer pressure."
- Mary, 18

So there you have it. Teen boredom is ruining the lives of America's youth because they simply have nothing better to do. Is it the thrill? The high? The drunken feeling?

This issue has been around for a while and it's about time we started to do something about it.

Teen Boredom

by Crystal Medina

"What do you want to do tonight?" he asks.

"I don't know. What do you want to do?" she replies.

If you are a teenager, you are very familiar with this scenario. You've heard this or have had this conversation before.

Teen boredom is a bigger problem than most people think. Something that most people think is petty and common has been ruining the lives of America's youth. The truth is, when a lot of teenagers get bored, they resort to drugs and alcohol. Not only do they use drugs and alcohol but they abuse them. I talked to a couple of teens and here are their perspectives on the issue. None of these young people wanted their identities revealed so the names are not real.

"There have been times when my friends and I didn't have anything better to do so we've gone to 'cop liquor' [to ask a person of

on their face." - Kamila Kozikowska, 16

"I think love is when you find someone you're willing to share everything with, your heartaches and pains, your laughter and smiles. You let them enter your life and trust them with your heart." - Crystal Medina, 17

After all my research, I've come to the conclusion that love means different things to different people. You do have to put up with some stuff but not all. You have to draw the line somewhere.

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Letters to the Editor

Ancestral Photos Wanted

Dear Editor:

CHA residents are being asked to participate in a campaign to honor the memory of our enslaved ancestors. To mark the new millennium, the International Society of Sons and Daughters of Slave Ancestry (ISDSA), a lineage society dedicated to preserving slave genealogy for future generations, has launched a nationwide campaign to collect photographs of formerly enslaved ancestors to exhibit in Illinois and around the country. The exhibit will help to elevate our collective consciousness about an extraordinary people with broken spirit who contributed to the building of our nation.

The memory of our ancestors should be preserved simply because they were our ancestors. They helped the economies of many countries, families and individuals. Without them, not only would we not exist but our collective envi-

ronments – both national and international – would not be the same.

The ISDSA believes in being proud of our enslaved ancestors, not ashamed. We want to remember the past, not erase it; want to celebrate our heritage, not mourn it; and mourn it; and want to promote dialogue about this chapter in world history for the purpose of documenting and preserving slave genealogy for future generations. Families, schools, religious institutions and community groups are asked to support this campaign by submitting:

Photographs of formerly enslaved individuals to be placed on quilts for our traveling exhibit, "A Tribute to our Enslaved Ancestors: The People's Exhibit."

Stories that have been passed down from generation to generation by descendants of slaves and slave owners.

Names of enslaved ancestors to be etched in stone on a monument built in their honor.

To date over 200 photographs have been donated by people all across the nation. Some are faded, fuzzy, torn, stapled and poorly copied and preserved. But the photos have nevertheless survived, just as our people have. Cherished family photos of enslaved ancestors, held onto for over a century, were stored in Bibles, boxes and family albums. The photos were passed down from one generation to the next in an effort to preserve some semblance of family history. This is strong testimony to a peoples' determination to hold fast to their past and to their heritage.

**Robert H. Williams and Pat Bearden
International Society of Sons and Daughters of Slave Ancestry (ISDSA)**

Quilt, is currently on display at the Charles Hayes Investment Center, 4859 S. Wabash Ave., in Bronzeville. In April, the exhibit moves to the University of Illinois at Chicago at the African American Cultural Center.

Please submit photos of ancestors who were born in slavery (up to 1867) and lived to experience freedom to: ISDSA, PO Box 436937, Chicago, IL 60643-6937. Or drop photo submissions at the Charles Hayes Center. If you need help locating your ancestors, ISDSA will provide workshops on surfing the Internet to research your ancestry. For additional information, contact Pat Bearden at 773 238-2686.

African Greetings

Dear Editor:

It is with great joy and profound respect that I pick my pen to write you this letter. Today, Wednesday, Dec. 22, 1999, when I received the October 1999 issue of the magazine, I couldn't help but write to say "Bravo" to you personally and all the wonderful young journalists of your school. To

be frank, I am highly impressed about the writing skills of your students. When you came to Ghana in 1998, our students were so young and innocent looking that one would have thought they could not express themselves in writing. But since I started receiving copies of your *Residents' Journal*, my respect and admira-

ration for them never ceased growing deeper and deeper in heart. May the year 2000 bring you and your staff peace, love, prosperity and success in all endeavors.

**-Mawutodzi K. Abissath
Ministry of Communications
Ghana**

Management Woes

Dear Editor:

I am writing to you because I am a resident at Wentworth Gardens and I want to inform you of what is going on in our development.

First of all,

you can't get anything fixed unless you have a connection. Meaning: If you aren't a relative or a close family member of someone fixing things, then you are out of luck. The living conditions in our development are very poor. Everything is falling apart and nothing works. Pipes are always bursting and when your house floods, they do not pay you for your stuff that got damaged. We are paying low-income rent and living in housing but we don't have to get treated like it. To sum it all up, there are three letters, RMC

- Resident
Management Corporation. I do remember a time when we could go to the office and address any problems that we had. But now, it seems as if they don't want to hear anything.

Any time you step in any of the offices, you hear them discussing your business as well as others.

The whole development is run very unprofessionally. When you call the office, you get the impression that you have called a private home.

If resident management is worse than CHA, then why bother? It is hard to get any work done or respect when you're a resident in Wentworth Gardens.

- Frustrated and Disgusted Resident

Wake up, Residents

Dear Editor:

Come on, residents. Wake Up!

It's time to hear all of our voices on this so-called relocation plan of CHA's. Stop focusing on the materialistic things and give priority to the real issues. Stop making the topic of the day "whose hair is prettier" or "who's got the best sound system." Where are you going to put that sound system?

I was appalled after reading *RJ*'s last issue. It contained stories explaining the horrendous treatment CHA residents are

receiving. I was mainly concerned with the article about the Harold Ickes residents (of whom I am one) at 2233 S. Federal St. They herded these residents out like cattle, destroyed their personal property and to this day, I haven't seen one brick removed from this building.

It seems to me that before you start moving residents out, you'd have permanent housing to place them in. Where are all of our aldermen, congressmen, etc. who represent these areas? I sure will make note of this

come next election. Phillip Jackson, top man at CHA, I had faith in you after reading about your background. But now I'm thinking it's funny how they made you top man when this task came along.

Mayor Daley, I've always been taught to treat others as I would want to be treated. Let's say, hypothetically, you had to move the residents of Dearborn Park off that land. Would they be treated in this manner? I think not and I'm losing respect.

All in all, I'm here

right now because I have to be, not because I want to be, as I believe many people in these developments are. I have a 3-year-old to raise and I want the best for her as any normal parent would. Just because I'm poor doesn't make me a bad person and susceptible to this type of treatment. Anyone can write down their promises in their little contracts, clauses and phrases about what is supposed to happen. What I want to know is if it will actually be carried out.

-Lienora Foster

A Poem of Praise

Dear Editor:

Church is a part of my life. For Jesus, I'd make any sacrifice.

People look at me funny when I say church. They look up in the air, like they hear birds chirp. I'm proud to say I love the

Lord.

He heard my cry and sent Heaven from above. People who think I'm crazy can continue to think that. I'm not turning my back or cutting Jesus any slack. I'll honor Jesus 'til the day I die,

So don't you cry just say goodbye. I'll be happy up above. The Lord will take care of me and the stars of love.

-by Seprina Redmond, Age 17

Residents' Journal welcomes submissions from all of our readers and especially from public housing residents.

Please send all letters to our new address:

4859 S. Wabash Chicago, IL 60615.

You may also call our office at (773) 285-0200 x 3372 to discuss your ideas for submission.

Dear Resident

by Patricia Johnson-Gordon

Despite the mild to moderate to monumental Y2K disaster predictions, here we are, just like the rest of Chicago, safe and sound in the new millennium. Here we are with the same old new challenge of how to improve the quality of life for public housing residents and the same new old problems.

Old problems affect more of our young people at an even earlier age, causing them to fall victim to something that can only be described as a cultural plague.

A culture of single, female head of households, below average elementary school students (too many classified as having behavioral disorders), high school drop-outs, teen-age parents, young criminal offenders, very young, young, old and even older substance abusers in a national atmosphere of violence, violent music and violent movies. All of this, coupled with confusion and anger and more anger with respect to their place in society. Young people today do not view our position in society and society's position on us as reasonably as past generations.

By no means are these cultural ills exclusive to public housing. But by no means are these cultural ills more concentrated anywhere than they are in public housing.

Unlike past generations, when a culture was what you did, today a culture is what you become. And things will continue in the same old way. So we thought. So we think?

Truly, the only difference between the old and new millennium was the nano-second when 1999 became 2000.

While many things may separate the fortunate from the less fortunate, physical space is not one of them.

What was in the old millennium rolled over into the new millennium just like the numbers on a clock. Little else changed for most of us, unless we were already in the midst of change when the new millennium struck.

Change, for the most part, even when it seems radical (extreme), is slow and methodical (arranged, characterized by or performed with method and order). Sometimes change results from careful planning and manipulative cunning (the ability to change by artful or unfair means so as to serve one's own purpose). Every once in a while, but not often, change is sheer happenstance or coincidence.

But if nothing else, change if necessary. There can be no progress without it. There can be no movement without it. We would be stuck in time. And we have been for a long time.

While the new millennium did not bring catastrophic change, change will

come. Change will come gradually. Change will come methodically. Especially for the old, outdated, burdensome, effortful (full of effort) concepts of the old millennium like public housing in Chicago. Public housing is not just groups and rows of red and white high-rise structures that signal danger, death and drugs to most and home to others.

Somewhere in the old millennium, and not only in Chicago, public housing went from a place to live to a way to live. It became a culture (the ideas, customs, skills, arts, etc. of a people or group in a particular period and place that are transferred, communicated or passed along in or to succeeding generations).



Patricia Johnson-Gordon and daughter Joyce in the summer of 1978.

Photo by Patricia Johnson-Gordon

Originally, public housing was a social program accompanied by other social programs designed to improve the quality of life for America's less fortunate.

But somewhere in the old millennium, the "fortunate" financially and physically withdrew support from America's social programs. The "fortunate" began living in such a manner that it appeared they would not, could not, be affected by the ills of society's less fortunate.

Now, the "fortunate" ones realize that nothing could be further from the truth. Their pulling away of society and its norms left behind a sub-society which then evolved into a culture with its own norms. Today, while many cultures may exist in America, we are still, if nothing else, one society. While many things may separate the fortunate from the less fortunate, physical space is not one of them.

Once again, society sees the need to improve the quality of life for America's less fortunate. Without a doubt, you can tear down public housing. But can you tear down its culture? For as long as a society has members, its cultures are sustained. Unfortunately, not only are they sustained. In our case, culture is fueled

by confused, angry youth who do not see any way out, who work to optimize (develop to the utmost extent) the culture. Add to that the societal differences and you have the two things that hinder change more than anything else: a lack of understanding and distrust. So, while we have no choice, can we trust society to look out for our best interest again? Do they care about our problems or the fact that we pose a problem to them?

The culture of public housing is such that most residents seem as hopeless as the structures in which we live. They are totally immersed in the culture, unaware of much else. For culture, too, is slow and methodical. Like the fortunate, many of us live here somehow thinking that we cannot be touched by the ills of our society or maybe we just accept it. But slowly, we lose our children, our families and our lives to the culture of public housing. In any culture/society, it is "survival of the fittest." Only the "fit" will survive. Like everything around us, we must change. Ultimately, we will change for better or worse anyway. So, why not change for the better? We must become fit if we are to survive and prosper. And we must help one another become physically, mentally, emotionally and financially fit. We must learn and teach our children a new way to live.

The new millennium has also increased the speed with which social generations evolve. While family generations remain the same, a social generation is a high school graduating class that occurs each year.

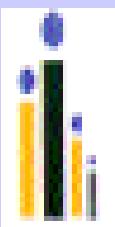
Therefore, we lose a social generation every year that the majority of our young people fail to graduate high school with their graduating class. In addition to becoming high school drop-outs, they become social drop-outs as well, unable to function in society, many confined, physically and mentally, to their public housing community. Perhaps the question should not be "can we trust society?" but "can we trust our collective self to work together to improve the quality of life for our future and our children?"

Surely, some of us remember the promise of hope for our children's future as we held them in our arms. The hope and desire for an opportunity for a better life for them and their children. If they are to have the hope of this promise, we must change. We must become slow and methodical or lose more of our children, even whole families, to our culture. We must do what we can to keep the promise of hope. I will. Will you?

Hopefully,

Pat

Author's Note: Definitions in this article that are in parentheses are all from Webster's New World Dictionary.



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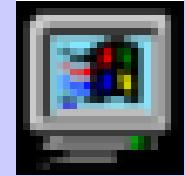
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