

R E S I D E N T S '

# Journal

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Chicago, Illinois  
Permit No. 5398

*A publication for and by Chicago public housing residents January/February 2003 /Volume 6/ Number 6*



## "FOOT STEPS OF THE KING"

BLACK HISTORY



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# **Haymarket House AD**

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

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

We The People Media is committed to the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution which protects the Freedom of the Press.

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# Publisher's Box

by Ethan Michaeli



There are a lot of urban legends out there about the redevelopment of Chicago's public housing communities. Urban legends and other myths - like the movie 'Candyman' or stories about alligators living in the sewer system. - are useful for frightening children or for a scary night in front of the television. Watching a scary movie will keep kids out of the basement, even when it is time to get the laundry.

But the myths I'm writing about are those that are keeping Chicago Housing Authority officials, advocates and activists from crafting a public housing redevelopment plan that will really work for tenants. These are myths that doom any redevelopment plan because they stop those responsible for developing and implementing any redevelopment plan from

public housing units. That means that CHA is less than 3 percent of the way through the Plan for Transformation, though it is 30 percent of the way through the time frame for the plan. Part of the reason the Plan is moving so slowly, of course, is that the CHA has built almost no replacement housing. Land where Robert Taylor Homes' replacement housing is supposed to be built has been vacant for two years now.

In North Kenwood-Oakland, the land

## Myths and Urban Legends

going where they should - intellectually, that is.

**Myth #1: The Plan Is Too Far Along To Stop Now.** In fact, while many buildings have been demolished, just 2,300 families have been relocated since the Plan for Transformation began three years ago, according to CHA officials. Of that number, 1,300 families have moved out of public housing using Housing Choice Vouchers (formerly known as Section 8 vouchers and certificates). One thousand families have moved into other

where the CHA promised to build replacement units for the Lakefront Properties buildings has been vacant for close to two decades now.

**Myth #2: There Is Not Enough Money To Complete The CHA Plan.** It is true that the \$1.5 billion that CHA has budgeted is not enough to complete the plan. That figure would be too low even if the agency was using all of it to develop the mixed-income communities they have promised to construct.

(Continued on Page 4)

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Residents' Journal and the Urban Youth International Journalism Program are supported by the Chicago Reader, the Open Society Institute, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Chicago Community Trust, the Albert Pick Fund, the Polk Brothers Foundation, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

# Transforming CHA

## An Invasion of Privacy?

by Beauty Turner  
Assistant Editor

There are many issues that lie buried behind the walls of public housing, but this is one that I wanted to shed a little light on.

Many residents in the Raymond Hilliard Homes are feeling violated by the very thought of the Chicago Housing Authority and the development's private management firm, Holsten Realty, wanting them to submit to a drug test in order to renew or receive a lease.

Recently, a few tenants handed me a new draft lease that read, "As a precondition to renewing this lease, landlord requires that all adult members (persons 18 and older) submit a urine sample for an analysis of such sample for non prescribed, prohibited controlled substances, by a qualified laboratory selected by the landlord."

After reading this, I wanted to know what the Hilliard Homes Local Advisory Council president, Maner Jean Wiley, thought of a lease which requires her residents to pass a drug test.

Wiley said, "I'm comfortable with it.

"After all, it will eliminate the drug problem that we have here. And when the new mixed income community

comes, it will stay beautiful and drug free."

I also called CHA spokesperson Kathryn Greenberg and asked her about the legalities of lease provisions that require residents of public housing to submit to a drug test.

Greenberg said, "I know that they have drug testing at North Town Village near Cabrini (referring to the new mixed-income community near Cabrini Green). Holsten also manages them."

Greenberg suggested that I call Jackie Taylor at Holsten Realty's main office and ask her about the drug testing.

So I called Jackie Taylor at the main office and asked her about the legality of drug testing residents.

Taylor said, "We have talked to numerous CHA lawyers that said that this can be done."

Taylor went on to say, "People have an option to say 'No' to the drug test. But they also have the option to live elsewhere."

I was still curious after talking to Taylor. So I called Adam Schwartz, staff counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union .

I faxed him a copy of Hilliard's renewal lease and asked him what he thought of drug testing the residents of Hillard Homes and North Town Village.

Schwartz said, "The ACLU feels that to ask anyone to take a drug test as a condition of receiving housing, whether they are from public housing such as Hilliard or from a mixed-income community such as North Town

The ACLU feels that to ask anyone to take a drug test as a condition to receive housing...is a direct violation of the Fourth Amendment.

-Adam Schwartz, ACLU Staff Council

Village, is a direct violation of the Fourth Amendment (of the U.S. Constitution).

"It's an invasion of privacy."

One resident from Hilliard Homes who asked that her name not be used heard about the drug testing lease renewal and said, "I feel so violated. What is America coming to? Are they trying to say that people who have a drug problem shouldn't have homes?"

"They think that they have a homeless problem now. Just wait until they start checking for drugs in order to rent apartments."

## Myths and Urban Legends (Cont)

### (Continued from Page 3)

And instead of spending all that money on building housing, CHA is sending out tens of millions of dollars to other agencies. Chicago is one of the only cities in the nation where the housing authority subsidizes services for other city residents.

Meanwhile, other city agencies are spending hundreds of millions of dollars on projects that range from installing planters and trees on roadways, rehabbing Lower Wacker Drive, and creating the new Millennium Park. None of these projects are as important as housing the city's poor. The Lower Wacker Drive project, moreover, is ironic because that space under Chicago's financial center was an unofficial homeless shelter before the reconstruction, and became an unofficial homeless shelter again the day it was completed.

If the city had chosen to build housing instead of rehabbing Lower Wacker Drive, maybe the homeless wouldn't need to live there. Indeed, if the City chose to build housing instead of planters, it might have plenty of money to house all the CHA families as well as the tens of thousands of low-income families who have waited on the CHA waiting list for many years.

**Myth #3: The Plan For Transformation Has The Mayor's Support.** As I mentioned above, CHA is paying other city agencies tens of millions of dollars, ostensibly to provide CHA residents with services. Most of this money, however, goes to the city police department and it's obvious to anyone who has ever been in the developments that residents are not getting even minimal police services.

CHA is giving \$13 million to the police department this year, twice as much as it spends on providing social services. Why? Perhaps it's the old model of how politics work in Chicago. If you are an up-and-coming politician in Chicago, or want to be an up-and-coming politician, then you have to get other city agencies to back you for any future candidacy. CHA CEO Terry Peterson, an ambitious young Chicago politician, may be paying off the police department and other city agencies to get their support for any future run for office.

I don't know that for sure. Regardless of whether that theory is correct, however, it is clear that Peterson's priority is to give his limited funds to other city agencies instead of expending his political capital to get those city agencies to do for CHA residents what they do for the rest of the city. The fact that CHA is giving money to other city agencies also means that Mayor Richard M. Daley has not ordered those city agencies to contribute to the CHA pot, instead of the other way around. Does the school system pay to have police officers patrol high schools? Does the Park District pay the Department of Streets and Sanitation to pick up its garbage?

**Myth #4: CHA Developments Are 'Isolated Pockets of**

**Poverty.** Researchers, government officials and media pundits are fond of describing CHA developments as "isolated pockets of poverty."

This is a myth that I like to describe as a symptom of Cabrini-Green syndrome. Cabrini-Green attracts a lot of attention because it looks like an "isolated pocket of poverty." Cabrini-Green is surrounded on three sides by more affluent neighborhoods and on the west by the Chicago River. For many people, Cabrini-Green is proof that if you just tear down the buildings, the residents will be liberated to become middle-class folks.

But Cabrini-Green is not isolated. On any given day, a veritable United Nations of people come to Cabrini-Green and many other developments to buy drugs or engage in other nefarious activities. Police ignore the lines of people outside certain buildings in CHA developments and often reach 'accommodations' - meaning that they get bribes - with the gang members who control the building lobbies.

Like most of the other developments, Cabrini-Green serves as a "red light district" for the area in which it is situated. People only describe Cabrini-Green as a "pocket of poverty" when they are interested in claiming the land. Real estate developers are the main cheerleaders for plans that break the 'isolation' of public housing communities. And, not surprisingly, real estate developers are the chief beneficiaries of efforts to 're-integrate' public housing communities.

Most importantly, residents are not isolated from each other. While most residents are low-income, they depend on networks of friends and family members to stretch their meager incomes. Indeed, CHA developments are some of the few places that are left in this country where neighbors know each other. Relocation and redevelopment don't cure people of poverty. Relocation and redevelopment usually just break apart these networks and leave residents more isolated than they were before they left the developments.

**Myth # 5: Nobody Cares About The Residents.** I can understand why many people, including many residents, feel this way. Looking at the neglect in the developments, the failure of major media organizations to cover public housing issues, and the shrugs that most people give when they hear about public housing issues, it's easy to be convinced that nobody cares.

But there are those who do care about what happens in public housing. First and foremost, there are the thousands of residents who show that they care every day, either by looking out for a neighbor's child, helping their neighbors, participating in their development's organizations, or just keeping up-to-date about what is happening around them.

And there are outsiders who care also. Some care because

they see the conditions in which residents are living and it makes them angry or sad or it just motivates them to take action. You can find the names of some of those people on page 3 of our publication, where we list the names of all of those who have become sponsors of the *Residents' Journal*. Each of these people care about what happens in public housing.

Beyond the individuals, some legal advocacy groups like Business Persons in the Public Interest and the National Center on Poverty Law have represented residents in court for many years. Moreover, many groups, such as the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs and the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, have demonstrated a commitment to public housing by devoting their money or their staffs to the cause of public housing residents.

There are others who 'care' about what happens in public housing, even if the reasons they care are more connected to their bank accounts than the welfare of the residents. Developers, construction companies, demolition companies, the firms that have social service contracts and city agencies all 'care' about what happens in public housing, even if they are really looking out for their own financial interests.

Indeed, residents can and should find fault with just about everyone who is involved in public housing. Just look at the results; a system that was supposed to provide "safe, decent and sanitary housing" for the poor has failed on all counts. CHA's housing is not safe, not decent nor sanitary and the agency doesn't even come close to housing all the city's poor. There is plenty of blame to go around.

But that doesn't mean that no one cares. Quite the contrary. One just has to be clear about why they care.

\*\*\*\*\*

There are many other myths that I could have added to this list. Myths restrict our thinking when it comes to devising solutions to the real problems in public housing.

The myths I've listed above, after all, are just the myths about public housing redevelopment in Chicago. Many of those myths are derived from other myths, darker, more pernicious ideas like racism, sexism and classism. If we do not believe those myths, we should not act like poverty, drug abuse, violence, and a lack of health care are the specific problems of public housing tenants.

Those problems exist in every corner of our society. CHA developments are just the places where these problems are most concentrated. The problems of CHA residents, therefore, are no more scary than the problems anywhere else.

The best antidote to the monsters under your bed is to turn on the lights and get a good night's sleep.

# Transforming CHA

## News Briefs

### CHA Board Approvals

Last month, the Chicago Housing Authority Board of Commissioners authorized the CHA to enter into a loan agreement with Chicago Metropolitan Housing Development Corporation in the amount of \$1,498,606 for the purchase of 16 one-bedroom units within the Domain Lofts Development as replacement housing for Cabrini Extension North residents. The 20-year loan, a portion of the HOPE VI Grant funds awarded to Cabrini-Green in 1994, is subject to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development approval. The former Montgomery Ward catalogue building at 600 W. Chicago Ave. is being converted by Centrum Properties into a "mixed-used" development which includes 298 condominium units and parking space located on various floor levels. Rent for the former Cabrini residents is proposed to be a minimum of \$120 per month.

Also approved was a \$250,000 settlement agreement by CHA to God's Gang, a resident-assisted organization that provided food and books to needy residents, and taught children of the Robert Taylor Homes agriculture through worm and fish farming. The fish froze to death in December 1999 after no home was found for them when CHA closed the building.

### HUD Cuts Public Housing Budgets

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development will be cutting funds for public housing because of miscalculations in its accounting system beginning in 1999, according to a Jan. 15, 2003 letter from HUD Assistant Secretary Michael Liu. Public housing authorities nationwide are expecting a 10 percent cut for their fiscal year 2003 operations budgets.

Several public housing agencies have reported that they would cut their spending until more money is approved, which could result in reduced policing, social and recreational services, and building maintenance for the low-income residents.

The Chicago Housing Authority, the nation's third largest public housing agency and which is currently undergoing a massive plan to transform its properties in mixed-income communities, expressed little concern regarding the issue.

"Obviously we're concerned any time the operating fund gets cut. But we're not excepting to cut those programs. We believe that we will be able to maintain our level of services for the police and the residents' services," Greenberg explained.

"We also receive funds through our capital, and through Section 8, and we are able to look at all of those and administrative savings that we can do internally. Reducing some of our internal costs and other ways to make sure that we can maintain services that we have for residents through the Service Connector Program and for the police services."

CHA, whose fiscal year begins on Jan. 1, receives approximately \$180 million annually for their Operations Budget, according to Greenberg. CHA had received \$10 million so far by January 2003.

# Report Criticizes CHA Relocations

by Mary C. Johns  
Editor-in-Chief

All is apparently not well on the home front for many public housing residents who are undergoing the Chicago Housing Authority's massive \$1.6 billion plan to turn its public housing properties into mixed-income communities.

A recent independent study of the housing plan by a renowned attorney, hired by the public housing agency to do the study, discovered that some residents did not have enough time and/or opportunity to secure units in the private market using Housing Choice Vouchers, while others moved into rehabilitated units within CHA that were "substandard and decrepit."

Tom Sullivan, an attorney with the law firm Jenner & Block, was contracted by CHA from July 18, 2002 to April 30, 2003 "to ensure monitoring and tracking of the relocation process," during Phase II of the Plan for Transformation, as per the CHA Resident Relocation Rights Contract.

Sullivan found that residents who were relocated in 2002 had not received proper relocation information on where to move by the mobility counselors hired to assist them in their move. The Service Connector program, CHA's main effort to provide tenants with social services, also was experiencing problems with connecting residents to services and ensuring that they stay or become lease compliant, employed and integrated into the community during relocation from CHA properties.

Sullivan also found that there was a lack of proper inspections of replacement units being done by CHA personnel by the agency hired to oversee the former Section 8 Program. And residents with outstanding high utility bills were running into trouble securing replacement housing. Sullivan further reported concerns about residents relocating into other public housing developments whose family members and friends have been harassed by gang members at their relocation site.

"We talked to 140 people.... I tried to render a report that was fair but didn't pull any punches," Sullivan said in an interview.

Sullivan produced five reports but CHA has refused to release the first four. In his final report, dated Jan. 8, 2003, Sullivan stated that some residents like their rehabbed relocation units. But a number of other residents were moved into other CHA replacement units that were - as one building manager at Stateway Gardens put it - "almost like a horror movie."

"We have also been told, and have personally observed, that during Phase II, some residents were moved into make-

ready units that were decrepit and sub-standard," he wrote.

The units were supposed to be inspected and approved by the building's property manager, a member of CHA's Operations Department, a representative of the general contractor and the construction company manager. And a representative of the LAC was offered an opportunity to make pre-occupancy inspection, Sullivan reported.



Mary C. Johns

contractor and the construction company manager. And a representative of the LAC was offered an opportunity to make pre-occupancy inspection, Sullivan reported.

Sullivan described some of the units as being "inhabited for years, with plumbing and electrical systems in poor, undependable conditions."

Sullivan wrote that the tight time schedules for building closures and the rigid adherence to those dates led to the neglect.

**T**he result has been that the vertical ghettos from which families are being moved are being replaced with horizontal ghettos, located in well-defined, highly segregated neighborhoods on the west and south sides of Chicago.

**-Tom Sullivan, Attorney, Jenner & Block**

There were 52 make-ready units prepared at CHA family sites from April 1 to June 30, 2002, compared to 375 units from July 1 to Sept. 30.

### Mobility Counseling

**T**he CHA Leaseholder Housing Choice and Relocation Rights Contract states that "Mobility Counseling is available for Leaseholders interested in moving to opportunity areas." 'Opportunity areas' are defined as "census tracts with no more than 23.49 percent of families with incomes below the poverty level and no more than 30 percent African American population."

But the report states that "no serious effort was made to explain the availability of moves to opportunity areas, or provide counseling" to residents using Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) during relocations which occurred in 2002.

"A persistent criticism of the HCV program in the CHA relocation process is that most of the families have been relocated to highly segregated areas inhabited largely by families whose income is below the poverty level," Sullivan wrote.

"The result has been that the vertical ghettos from which families are being moved are being replaced with horizontal ghettos, located in well-defined, highly segregated neighborhoods on the west and south sides of Chicago."

The late start of the relocation process for residents in 2002 was a big problem, according to Sullivan. As a

result of his reports, Sullivan said CHA will hire four more counseling agencies to assist in the 2003 relocations.

The mobility counselors are now required to identify at least five units in opportunity areas based on each family's preference. The housing counseling agency must escort the family to at least three of the units. Additionally, the mobility counselors are prohibited from providing information to relocating residents about housing units in areas such as East Garfield, Englewood, Grand Boulevard, Washington Park, West Englewood and Woodlawn, areas where there is already a high concentration of low-income residents and vouchers.

### Service Connector Program

**O**ther concerns by Sullivan included the Service Connector Program, which CHA established in the spring of 2001, "to connect residents to services and ensure that they stay or become lease compliant, employed and integrated into the community during relocations from CHA properties," according to the report.

There was, he said, "a serious shortcoming in this respect."

The program, which is provided by 4 social service agencies, and administered and monitored by the Chicago Department of Human Services, is required to service residents in 23 CHA developments, with assistance and referrals to outside social service providers.

To summarize the defects of the Service Connector program, Sullivan stated in the report that the program during Phase II was "woefully inadequate" because it was "grossly under funded" which resulted in its being understaffed to handle too many caseloads.

### High Utility Bills

**A**nother major concern Sullivan pointed out was the high number of unpaid electric bills several residents had been receiving for years. Residents' Journal has been following this issue very closely in a series of articles on the topic beginning in the March/April 2002 issue.

Sullivan stated in his report that he and his associates were repeatedly told by almost every LAC president and many others about many residents' large unpaid, overdue utility bills.

He reported "that many families have not been able to resolve these bills, and others have agreed to payment plans with which they are financially unable to comply."

# Transforming CHA Seniors Complain About Renovations

by Lorenzia Shelby

In mid April 2002, work began on a number of Chicago Housing Authority senior building sites. This was the latest installment of the plan to renovate all of the senior buildings.

In my building, the Las Americas Racine Apartments in the Pilsen community at 1611 S. Racine Ave, they started working on the outside of the building. The first thing they worked on was the roof. They stripped and cleaned the roof of old tar and debris, and did a complete restoration.

Their next task was the sides of the building. They started at the top of the building grinding and scraping old concrete from between the bricks until the four sides of the building were done.

They washed the sides of the building down with water, preparing them to be tuck-pointed and caulked. Construction work is physically demanding and exhausting. It is difficult work to go up and down the building's sides. The workers are on scaffolds and the ropes, chains and other lines that secure the scaffold to keep it from falling were connected to the steel poles on the roof.

They worked from the top down. At the end of their work hours, they would take the scaffold back nearly to the roof and secure it along the side of the building for the night.



A senior Korean resident (right) questions CHA officials Auggie Chidichimo (left), Duwain Bailey (second left) and others about when a meeting would be held to address his and other residents' concerns about the rehabilitation of the Sheridan and Leland Apartment building in which they reside.

Photo by Mary C. Johns

Income Energy Home Assistance Program (LIHEAP) may get \$300 million less than last year, if the Bush Administration gets its way. For decades, LIHEAP has helped many elderly and low-income residents by paying

I simply don't have the money to pay this bill. If I don't stay current with my utility bills, I will lose my housing. This is not fair. You can't squeeze blood out of a turnip.  
*-a former public housing resident*

their gas and electric bills.

Advocates are up in arms about the possibility of thousands of low-income people

The work day started at 7 a.m. and ended at 4 p.m., give or take a few minutes. A lot of the residents complained about the dust and noise, the loud screaming, piercing sounds coming from the grinding and scraping of the bricks.

Willie McClain, a long-time tenant in the Racine apartments, said, "They created a lot of dust and noise and still did a lousy job."

Nearly all of the tenants were complaining about the dust; how the dust entered their apartments through the openings in the cracks of the windows. The water they sprayed on the side of the building penetrated the windows with ease. Many residents blamed the poor condition of the windows for failing to prevent the dust and water from entering their apartments.

One tenant said, "The dust aggravated my asthma and interfered with my breathing."

There were four scaffolds on the four sides of the building. The dust filled the air surrounding the building and the nearby neighbor's homes.

Kermit Mosley, a long-time resident, said, "All that grinding, banging and dust in the air flying in the air, it was too much for senior citizens to endure."

A resident of the Pilsen community who has a house adjacent to the Racine Apartments said, "All that white dust blew into my house, causing me to have health problems. And I'm going to file legal action against CHA and G.F. Construction."

In the last days of August, the grinding, banging and tuckpointing stopped. The outside work had been completed but the inside work was already in progress. The grinding, banging and loud noises were now inside the building. The plans were to rejuvenate all the apartments in the build-

ing.

They put in new toilet seats, wash bowls, showers and new windows. G.F. Construction didn't want anyone living on the floors they were remodeling so the tenants on the intended floors had to move. Racine Apartments has nine floors.

The renovation began on the ninth floor but first the tenants on that floor had to be relocated. The plans were to renovate the vacant apartments in the building and move the tenants on the ninth floor and Tier six into those apartments. Tier six are apartments from 106 to 906 and they would be reserved for tenants with the severest disabilities, management officials announced.

The inside work was just as noisy as the outside was. The banging and the drilling would wake you up in the morning and continue through the day. On any week day, tenants would receive a notice that read, "Sorry for the inconveniences but the water will be cut off tomorrow from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m."

Tenants had to fill their pots and pans



Jerelean Hall, a CHA senior resident of the Racine Apartments with her Granddaughter, Samirah.

Photo by Lorenzia Shelby

would take you to the fifth floor and then, if you push number one, it will take you down to two, stop, and go back up to the seventh

**T**here weren't any work permits at the site and CHA is looking at a lot of paperwork that was improperly done.

*-Kim Johnson, CHA spokesperson*

with water to wash and cook with. This occurred one to five times a week.

They also cut the gas off on the east side of the building. The construction crew knocked out the wall on each floor, making way for the makeshift elevator to haul their work equipment up and down to each floor.

The inside renovation continued into fall and winter. The workers installed makeshift doors into the east wall of the building but the doors weren't winterized and cold air seeped through the top and bottom of the door, making the hallways cold.

The air conditioners they installed in the windows left a lot to be desired. Cold air came through the air vents and underneath the air conditioner, where the workers left a half-inch opening. The cold air came from the outside into the apartments.

There was another inconvenience. The Racine Apartments had two elevators but one was eliminated in September 2002 with the intention of installing a new one, forcing 175 people to use one elevator. The other elevator

being affected by this cut. At the end of last year, many advocacy groups held mass protests concerning rapid increases in gas bills that were disproportionately affecting the elderly and the poor. Members from groups such as the Association of Community Organizations for Reform

Now (ACORN) were hauled off to jail while demonstrating in front of Peoples Energy.

have described the gas bills situation as a "national crisis."

Already, current and former public housing residents are complaining about their high gas and electric bills.

One former resident of public housing said, "How does the government expect for us to survive off of peanuts? All I'm receiving is food stamps.

"If it wasn't for this housing choice voucher, I couldn't afford a roof over my head," this former resident said.

"Now I'm receiving these harsh gas bills."

Waving a \$950 gas bill in my face, she said, "I simply don't have the money to pay this bill. If I don't stay current with my utility bills, I will lose my housing. This is not fair. You can't squeeze blood out of a turnip."

## Running Out of Gas

by Beauty Turner  
Assistant Editor

Cuts to the budgets of state and local governments are slicing into the pockets of the relocatees from public housing.

Public housing residents are not the only population affected by the budget cuts, of course. Activists and advocates for the poor are arguing that these cuts are taking and will take a big bite out of the pocket books of the working poor and middle-income residents as well.

Recent reports indicate that the Low-

Income Energy Home Assistance Program (LIHEAP) may get \$300 million less than last year, if the Bush Administration gets its way. For decades, LIHEAP has helped many elderly and low-income residents by paying

I simply don't have the money to pay this bill. If I don't stay current with my utility bills, I will lose my housing. This is not fair. You can't squeeze blood out of a turnip.  
*-a former public housing resident*

their gas and electric bills.

Advocates are up in arms about the possibility of thousands of low-income people

The Rev. Jessie Jackson Sr. held a news conference at Rainbow/PUSH headquarters about this very issue. Jackson and others

# Transforming CHA

## Residents Sue CHA

by Mary C. Johns  
Editor-in-Chief

Former and current public housing residents who claimed to be "involuntarily displaced and segregated" filed suit against the Chicago Housing Authority on Jan 23, 2003.

The lawsuit alleges that CHA "failed to provide adequate relocation assistance and effective social services to families displaced by public housing demolition," in violation of federal law and CHA's contractual agreements with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and with CHA resident leaders.

After previous interactions with residents who were displaced by the CHA, and after communications with current residents who participated in their housing research, attorneys of the National Center on Poverty Law, the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and Business and Professional People for the Public Interest came together to stop the public housing agency from displacing other families in the future.

The lawsuit claims that residents are being displaced to deplorable living conditions in segregated areas in high poverty areas. The lawsuit further charges CHA with violation of federal laws, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998, which requires public housing authorities to not "materially disadvantage" residents of public housing during relocation.

The lawsuit also charges that CHA is in violation of an agreement with the federal government under their Plan for Transformation in which CHA is obligated to provide "comparable replacement housing located in an area not less desirable than of the Leaseholder's original dwelling unit with respect to commercial and public facilities..."

On May 30, 1995, HUD took control of CHA. Shortly after, CHA began demolishing its public housing stock after receiving funding from the federal government's Home Ownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere program, also known as HOPE VI.

From 1995 until approximately 1997, CHA did not operate any programs to assist the hundreds of families relocating from demolished or vacated units, and encouraged residents to accept rent vouchers under the former Section 8 program, according to the suit.

The suit claims that when CHA hired Changing Patterns for Families in or around 1997 to provide relocation services to the CHA families, "they failed to provide the mobility assistance to enable the families to move into racially integrated neighborhoods."

Based upon "information and their belief," the plaintiffs charged that CHA knew Changing Patterns for Families was not providing information to the families on opportunity areas where there was a low poverty level that was racially diverse. But CHA failed to take any action to prevent Changing Patterns from relocating the families to predominately African American neighbor-

hoods, the lawsuit alleges.

To assist in the plaintiffs' claims, the suit refers to a recent study by a public housing expert Paul Fischer, a professor at Lake Forest College, who was commissioned by the National Center on Poverty Law to report on the relocation.

Fischer reported that 83 percent of the approximate 3,200 families that relocated between 1995 and 2002 moved to neighborhoods that were at least 90 percent African American, and 50 percent moved to "high poverty" areas.

about ways to resolve the issue and then they went to court with the lawsuit."

### Attorneys for the Residents

The residents' attorneys dispute CHA's account of their interactions.

Alex Polikoff, an attorney at Business and Professional People for the Public Interest who is one of the lawyers that is working pro bono on behalf of the seven residents who are suing CHA, said during a February phone interview that "CHA refused



**CHA relocatee Mary Sistrunk (second from right) and attorneys Adam Gross (from left), William P. Wilen and Alexander Polikoff filed suit against CHA in late January regarding resident relocations under the Plan for Transformation.**

Photo by Mary C. Johns

### CHA Responds

CHA spokesperson Kathryn Greenberg said during a phone conversation in late January that she didn't know if CHA was accountable to those residents who moved prior to the city taking control over the public housing agency from HUD in October 1999.

"I understand that there is a class of people for this lawsuit that includes people that have moved as of 1995. And I really don't honestly know whether CHA is accountable to those residents who moved prior to the city taking over, or whether that is a HUD issue," she said.

"But I will say that in light of the fact that it is in court, we generally don't tend to

to negotiate with us."

"CHA is the obstacle to that. Not ourselves," Polikoff said.

"We very much wanted to negotiate instead of suing. In fact, we sent them a letter on Nov. 14, 2002, and we held off the suit for over 2 months in the hopes that they would enter into serious negotiations. You know, you can pretend to talk and not really talk, and that's what was happening," he declared.

Polikoff said that residents who were relocated before October 1999 were entitled to sue CHA because the public housing agency at the time allegedly began planning to demolish buildings and residents were forced out involuntarily because of the condition of their units. Polikoff said CHA

**he lawsuit claims that residents are being displaced to deplorable living conditions in segregated areas in high poverty areas.**

comment on the lawsuits except to just say that, of course, we obviously wish that we weren't getting sued, and would rather be spending our resources on making the changes that we all agree need to be made to better improve the outcomes for residents.

"But I think at the end of the day, it's going to get decided in court," Greenberg said.

Greenberg said that CHA had been working with the people involved before the lawsuit, and intended to keep doing so. But she said the group's attorneys stopped communicating with them.

"We were in communications with these groups to try and address their concerns," Greenberg explained. "And the last conversation we had with them, we continued to think we were going to continue talking

neglect caused the tenants to move out.

"The formal Transformation Plan didn't begin until later, but informal evictions occurred earlier. For example: first, knowing that it intended to demolish a building, CHA failed to maintain it so that the unit became uninhabitable. Flooding, rats, roaches and so on. And no human being could live in it anymore," Polikoff explained.

"So under those circumstances, the family says, 'I can't take this anymore.' And they move out. The reason CHA allowed the unit to deteriorate was that they knew they were going to be demolishing it and they didn't want to spend any money, disregarding that people were still living in it."

"So our theory is, if somebody moves out under those circumstances, they are entitled to relocation benefits just as much as

somebody who moves out after 1999."

Polikoff agreed that the lawsuit will take up much needed resources to service residents, but he said CHA should be improving the relocation process rather than litigating.

"But it is CHA that is forcing the litigation, not ourselves," he declared.

"I repeat, we held off filing the lawsuit for over 2 months in the hopes that they would negotiate seriously. We're eager to settle the case and get back to negotiations."

Other attorneys working on the case said CHA has been engaged in harassment of the tenants involved in the suit.

William P. Wilen, a lawyer with the National Center on Poverty Law, said four of the seven residents named in the lawsuit had complained about undergoing "surprise housing inspections" on Feb. 11, 12 and 13 by employees of the agency hired to run their Housing Voucher Program. Wilen said the inspections resulted in some evictions.

"They have been subjected to surprise inspections, and photos taken of their units by people from CHA. And 5 had a grievance denied unfairly," he said.

"They can't have their agents harassing our clients."

Wilen said the attorneys in the court case wrote a letter on Feb. 13 asking CHA lawyers to look into what CHA employees were doing, and would be getting a court order prohibiting CHA officials from any contact with the residents involved in the court case.

Charles R. Petrof of the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law said during a phone conversation in mid-February that a court hearing was scheduled for Feb. 28. But he said he expected the hearing to be postponed because CHA asked for more time to answer the complaint in the lawsuit.

"I expect that that date will be postponed and that the judge will grant CHA's request for additional time to answer our complaints," he said.

### One Small Voice

Lisa Taylor, a disabled mother of a 14-year old son, was the only plaintiff who could be reached by Residents' Journal press deadline.

She was in the process of moving at the time of her mid-February phone interview, and said that she was concentrating on moving and not the lawsuit.

"I'm not worrying about a lawsuit or anything else at this time. Some of our rights were violated. But I'm disabled, and my focus is on me moving, and what's around me. But other than me concentrating on that, I'm just trying to move," said Taylor.

Taylor was displaced from CHA in 1997 and currently lives in the Englewood community, which she said is no better than, and just as dangerous as, CHA.

"Every corner you pass, it's drug infested and there's gang bangers. I don't want to live like I'm living now. It's a high crime neighborhood. I'd rather have been placed where I was then, being in ABLA," she said.

Taylor said that she wants CHA to continue tearing down the high-rises and hopes that what comes out of the lawsuit is that CHA will house people in good neighborhoods.

# Chicago's Hottest Elections

by Beauty Turner  
Assistant Editor

I'm hot on the trails of the hottest candidates in this lukewarm election. Though many incumbents are running unopposed, some sparks are flying in the Windy City wind when it comes to this year's municipal race.

One of the races that is sure to be hot and sizzling and may cause a Chicago fire is the mayoral race. Mayor Richard M. Daley announced his bid for re-election in the last year, according to his campaign spokesperson, Julian Green.

"Our platform is called working together. Mayor Daley has been working with elected officials, city and community groups, reverends and the like to move Chicago forward," Green said.

"For many years, the city was divided but for the last 14 years, Mayor Daley has been bridging the gap."

When asked about what the popular mayor thinks about an activist like the Rev. Paul L. Jakes running against him, Green said, "The mayor thinks that anyone that wants to run should run."

Jakes, a West Side minister known for his protests against police brutality, has taken his campaign into Cabrini-Green on the North Side and into Bronzeville on the South Side. He has been spotted all over the city looking far and wide for votes.



**Beauty Turner**

that Chicago is having a crisis of affordable housing:

**I will also keep my eye on the CHA Transformation plan and the people they are displacing. They need social services and more jobs so they can make a transition into the private market.**

"Condominiums for the wealthy are relentlessly built while replacing affordable rental units. Property taxes rise, rents and land prices skyrocket, and low- and moderate-income people are forced out into the suburbs if they are able to move, or to the streets if not.

"Public housing is destroyed without

to the residents.

To this complaint, one LAC president said that in most cases, the residents who benefit from these items are the people who volunteer and in most cases attend meetings. This president said

the participation of tenants without necessary social services. The homeless rate increases daily to the tragic tune of 15,000 people on the streets every night."

In addition to Jakes, Pat McAllister and the Rev. Joseph McCaffey are also challenging Daley.

My next call was to find out about another hot race - the contest for Third Ward alderman. I tried to get comments from incumbent Ald. Dorothy Tillman but she did not return my phone calls before our deadline.

So my next call was to Tillman's main challenger, Pat Dowell, who is currently the executive director of the Near West Side Community Development Corporation.

I asked her what platform she was standing on.

"It's time that we start selling that land

"My platform is to give back the voice to the community. For too long, the voices of the community have been oppressed by Tillman. I plan on focusing on those 6,000 lots that are sitting on the land vacant. Tillman is selling (these sites) only to the wealthy.

to regular people instead of people with big money who end up making condominiums and pushing out the current residents.

"We need to open up opportunity for rental housing and cooperative housing for those residents who wish to stay. I will also keep my eye on the CHA (Chicago Housing Authority Transformation plan and the people they are displacing.

"They need social services and more jobs so they can make a transition into the private market. But without jobs, that transition is never going to happen."

The last hot race I will focus on is the Fourth Ward. Fourth Ward incumbent Ald. Toni Preckwinkle recently challenged the mayor with an affordable housing bill. I wanted to talk to Preckwinkle more about this proposed legislation but she wasn't available before our press deadline.

I did talk to her challenger, Norman Bolden, who said he was challenging Preckwinkle because of how she treated his properties.

Bolden said, "My platform that I'm running on is those 200 or so vacant lots that the alderman is sitting on and not letting regular people buy into them. Also, affordable housing is an issue. In the Fourth Ward, every able-bodied citizen who has a desire for employment, a job, should be able to receive one."

## Representing Residents

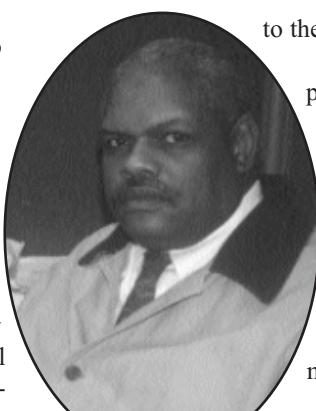
by Bobby Watkins  
Circulation/Advertising Manager

There have been a lot of complaints from public housing residents recently about the leadership in their developments. Some residents feel they are not being properly represented by their elected representatives. Others feel that there is always favoritism in the distribution of donated items, jobs and other things. Some residents also feel monies are being mismanaged.

I don't want to be biased as I am a member of the Lathrop Homes Local Advisory Council and have a good relationship with most of the LAC presidents. Yet, I want to be fair to all in this article. So I have chosen to speak with residents about these complaints but also hear the resident leadership's side. And let's hope, for the sake of both sides and the benefit of all residents, that these problems can be worked out and everyone can work together for the good of the residents during this time of transformation. Remember that we are going to find good as well as bad in most organizations.

Here are some of the complaints that residents had:

The complaint I was given most was that the same people are always picked for jobs and given the various things that CHA has to give



**Bobby Watkins**

that it makes sense to look out for them first.

One resident came to tenant services and complained that she served on the advisory council but did not know when the LAC meeting was or was never informed of the meeting and never received flyers to any of the events in the area.

I spoke with this LAC president and was told this person always is informed of the meetings because all board members receive a phone call and in addition receive a flyer or letter. This resident was even given a Christmas present brought by the president but never even showed to pick that

up, according to the president. She added that she believes that the attacks from this resident are because she also ran for LAC president and lost.

Then there are a few residents who get help from the LAC landing a job but then fail a drug test and get mad with the LAC. This is for sure not the fault of the LAC.

In the development in which I serve, I try to work for the good of all residents. But of course, you can't satisfy everyone. And let's just hope that there can be a better working relationship with all LAC and residents.

**Re-elect**

**Richard M. DALEY Mayor**  
*Jesse* **GRANATO Alderman ★ 1st Ward**

**Working together for a better community!**

# Report Criticizes CHA Relocations

## (Continued from Page 5)

"The utility companies apparently allowed these bills to accumulate over the years."

When families were attempting to achieve lease compliance in preparation for relocation, these bills were encountered, and presented a serious impediment," he stated.

Referring to "The Robert Taylor Homes Relocation Study" produced by Columbia University professor and We The People Media board member Sudhir A. Venkatesh and Residents' Journal Assistant Editor Beauty Turner, Sullivan pointed out the "serious impediment" in failing to address the utility bills issue.

He described how families during CHA relocations had been declared lease compliant while they possessed unpaid light bills, then given a Housing Choice Voucher to find a unit in the private market, only to lose the housing voucher if they couldn't establish utility connection.

"I have been told that the CHA Chief Executive Officer, Terry Peterson, has undertaken personally to discuss this matter with executives of the utility companies," Sullivan stated.

"This is obviously a matter of great concern...which ought to be resolved promptly."

### Gangs and Drugs

The Resident Relocation Rights contract with CHA states that residents should be relocated to a "decent, safe and sanitary" replace-

ment unit.

But Sullivan reported that in some instances, he was informed that residents who relocated in Phase II were moved in rehabbed apartments in buildings inhabited by members of gangs who were "antagonistic" to members, relatives or friends of the relocated fam-

ilies.

In his report, Sullivan stated that he and his colleagues had been told of several "violent incidents" that occurred as a result of the relocations. He was also told that violence is almost certain to occur if residents of Rockwell Gardens living in the building at 340 S. Western Ave. are moved into make-ready units at the Rockwell Gardens building at 2450 W. Monroe St.

Sullivan suggested that the dangerous gang rivalries should be taken into account when relocation sites are selected, "particularly for the safety of innocent family members, other residents, and bystanders."

Sullivan also reported personal observation of men acting as lookouts at gallery buildings, and others conducting what clearly appeared to be "illicit drug transactions," and at one time being escorted out of a Rockwell Gardens meeting because of gunfire.

### CAC Concerns

After viewing and discussing the data provided by Sullivan, resident leaders responded with a straightforward letter detailing their specific concerns about the Plan for Transformation. Mary Wiggins, the president of the Central Advisory Council, which consists of 24 Local Advisory Council presidents, read their letter to the CHA Board of Commissioners during a mid-January public meeting. "The deficiencies cited in the Report adversely affected a significant number of resi-

dents involved in the Phase II relocation process....It is essential going forward that families in the relocation process not be confronted with these situations," CAC Chairman Mary Wiggins read.

Wiggins, who is also the LAC president of the CHA Washington Park Homes, continued, "It is critical that there be immediate substantive actions on these findings and recommendations to ensure that the necessary corrective and remedial actions are implemented as soon as possible to improve the relocation process, and to eliminate similar problems for families involved in relocation scheduled for 2003 and beyond."

CAC also requested that CHA Board of Commissioners Chairman Sharon Gist Gilliam and CHA CEO Peterson ensure that the resident leadership receive quarterly reports on the progress of the redevelopment and relocation activities that CHA is required to give them - and the general public - as per the 2001 Residents Relocation Rights contract. "The CAC hopes and expects prompt response in addressing the Independent Monitor's findings and recommendations to develop strategies to improve the relocation process," Wiggins said.

### CHA Responds

CHA did not respond publicly to most of Sullivan's observations. CHA spokesperson Kathryn Greenberg said "CHA and CAC had recently begun meeting to address and find solutions for future improvements with the relocation process."

While CHA representatives would not comment on the study, CHA CEO Peterson did address the issue of the residents' high utility bills.

Peterson said after a February Tenant Services meeting that he had met with Commonwealth Edison officials within the past 6 months, and was in the process of setting up a meeting date with officials again.

"We met with ComEd and talked about taking off the interest on residents' electric bills, which can accumulate at 18 percent," Peterson said.

## Another One Bites The Dust



A former CHA resident watches as this Robert Taylor building is being demolished in early January.

Photo by Mary C. Johns



**ALDERMAN TONI PRECKWINKLE IS PROUD TO SALUTE THE RESIDENTS' JOURNAL DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH.**

**WE MUST ALL KEEP OUR EYES ON THE PRIZE OF FAIR HOUSING AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR ALL OF THE COMMUNITY.**

# Traveling: From Therapy to Art

by Michael Ibrahim

Last year, I decided to visit one of the most amazing locations on Earth. I decided I really needed to get a much closer view of the Himalayan mountain range in Asia. I had traveled there in the past without ever leaving the urban areas. This time, I allowed myself to do some trekking, which is the reason why most people go there.

I made a reservation about six weeks before I planned to leave the United States and almost immediately, I came down with something; I don't know what. I had to leave home still sick and continued feeling physically ill throughout the trip. I would have to recuperate once I got back to Chicago.

I left the Windy City in the middle of November and returned to the USA in December.

Somewhere in the Bible, I know it states that those who keep the Sabbath holy could receive the advantage of having a second soul descending upon them. Well, before long, it seemed that the mesmerizing effect of the splendid and almost otherworldly beauty of the Land of the Snows - as the Himalayas are known - had begun to affect me that way.

The entire time I was there, I spent at

experience seemed to supply me with a type of alter ego, which I felt palpably, allowing me to do all the things I wanted and needed to do. The experience was compelling enough to allow me to think that something supernatural was occurring throughout my trip.

Part of each day's routine consisted of me, though I was totally out of shape, climbing rocks, hills, descending into gullies along ancient river beds, fighting innumerable, unforgiving thickets (especially the partial trek to Mukhtinath) in our efforts to get from one place to another. At the end of each day, we eventually returned to whatever lodgings provided for that day's hike.

Luckily, the monks that accompanied me throughout had previously arranged all provisions for me, months before I arrived.

The largest, thriving metropolitan city of the area was Kathmandu. I found Kathmandu to be the city of my dreams. I had always wanted to go there because I liked the neat sounds of the syllables. The name furthermore served to remind me of the 1940s matinee cliffhanger super hero, Chandu the Magician: Chandu from Kathmandu.

I felt certain I would find him there. If anyone could locate for me the legendary Sanjeevanee (the herb of resuscitation), it would surely be him. Trouble was, nearly everyone I met seemed to resemble him.

No matter. Like I stated before, I had my own entourage of men equally endowed with esoteric knowledge and power to assist me in my quest for healing and understanding.

Each morning, it seemed thousands of women scampered about the entire city anointing the faces of various gods and goddesses found as sculptures and in bas-relief. They anointed them with ochre-colored powders and white sandalwood paste, ornamenting them also with flower garlands. On a tray, they carried tiny lamps fueled by clarified butter, incense and usually a small bell with the image of a bird at the top, known as Garooda. These were implements of worship.

Customarily, only the men in these regions are allowed to perform a full-fledged worship service known as Pooj. However, the act of worship performed by these ladies is referred to as an Arati.

The architecture around Kathmandu was simply amazing, with much of it constructed long ago. The rococo or lavish, ornamental style, was unlike anything you might find in the West.

The harmony of flavors accompanying each food dish seemed to resonate and hum in the afterthought of one's aesthetic sense of taste long after every meal.

Also hard to forget are the unusual sights and sounds of mysterious singsong human dialogue, bells on rickshaws, garland flowers everywhere from the morning services, and fruits and vegetables of every description.

The smell of spice pastes called masalas competed with extremely fragrant incenses wafting along every street, hugging each wind blowing around every corner from kitchens and temples everywhere.

Many of the rituals in which I was invited to participate were

secret in nature. Therefore, I pledged vows of secrecy never to speak of them. I also witnessed some of the most astonishing events and met with the most unusual characters. But I must never disclose their location nor speak of their siddhis, the term for the so-called magical powers accruing to them as a testament of their adeptship.

Finally, it was my turn. First, I was led before dozens of holy men, one by one, each in his own sacred space, to be purified, blessed and endowed with his brand of spiritual power. Next, after conferring on me a special kind of baptism (Acharya Abhishekam) generally unknown to the majority of Hindus, I was left to ponder the following admonition: "To speak is not to see."

Some people informed me that I was probably the first

non-indigenous person to receive such an honor since the 19th century. Afterwards, I made the connection that they were most likely referring to the famous British Indologist, author and monk Arthur Avalon. He lived in India towards the end of the 19th century, receiving many Hindu samskaras or sacraments.

Some might find it peculiar that I would undertake such an unusual journey as this in the first place. Simply stated, I was on a quest which I have pursued most of my life.

My passion for travel was ignited a long time ago. As an infant, doctors diagnosed me with a learning disability very similar to Autism called Aspergers Syndrome. As a consequence, my parents tried to remedy the situation by traveling with me in tow to meet wonder-workers of every description around the globe, searching for a cure.

One of my earliest and most vivid memories is of my parents talking to spirit doctors, pleading with them, asking what, if anything, could be done to help me. From infancy, doctors had labeled me as being autistic, a diagnosis with a wide range of symptoms. However, according to my father, one of the things that gave me away was the fact that I never seem to cry.

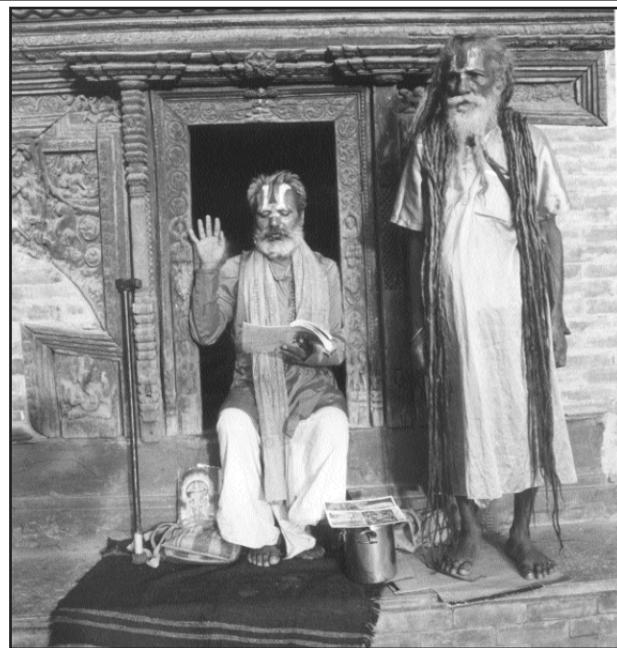
I remember my family taking me to Canada. Soon afterwards, I would be shuttled about throughout the rural South as my parents sought desperately to find a cure.

At some point, I began to feel more like a guinea pig than a patient with an illness. On one occasion, I had my body smeared with the insides of what I guess amounted to hundreds of cockroaches. There was also the time I was made to swallow a live goldfish. These practices took place in the rural South.

Overseas, I was generally circumambulated with fragrant incenses, blessed and prayed over. In Africa once, they smoked me with various herbs while I sat under a cloth.

Some impressions go very deep. As an adult, I followed the same pattern established by my parents in the past.

More than 50 odd years into the process, I now realize that my exposure to different cultures worldwide has served to bring out the

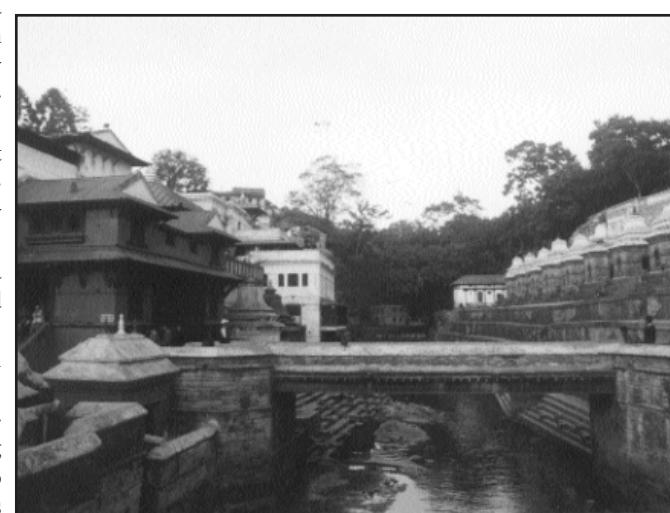


This Hindu student (seated) practices his religion as his spiritual teacher looks on in a small sanctuary near Mt. Kailash in Tibet.

Photo by Michael Ibrahim

artist in me. Perhaps that was it all along. The miraculous cure, for which I have searched so long, seems now to have been found.

Years ago, I realized my passion involved



Bagmati River in northern India in Bihar State.

Photo by Michael Ibrahim

travel. Whether it was international or national to me, it mattered very little, so long as I was on the move.

I should not have been too shocked, therefore, to find myself appearing to wander aimlessly across a number of Himalayan kingdoms - Bhutan, Ladakh, Nepal, China, Tibet, Himachal Pradesh, etc.

I was equipped with a DVD camera, complete with boom mics and a SLR Nikon equipped with a 24mm/f1.2 lens in my backpack. Eureka! I had discovered art as documentary filmmaking.

Once I returned home and started showing people the results of my three-week trekking adventure, many people were surprised and actually placed orders for enlargements of photos and paid for them with no hesitation. Gallery owners thought the photos were stupendous and that the unedited film teaser samples suggested a marvelous feast of things to come. I found their reaction encouraging and wondered, have I found my niche, have I arrived?

For many years, I traveled to search for a cure for my illness. I survived by employing my own strategies for dealing with the problem for so long.

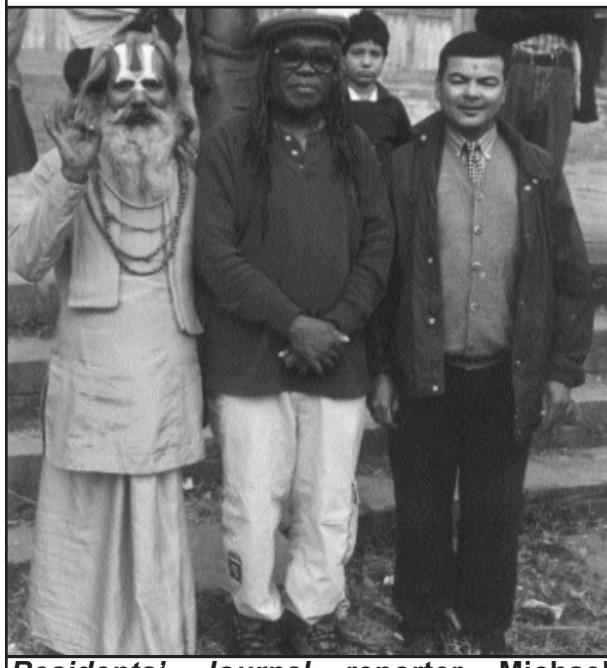
But now, I feel that I have passed this most rigorous of life's tests. I feel I have transcended and metamorphosed into an ARTISTE!!



Tibetan women making and selling flower garlands in Leh, Ladakh in November 2003.

Photo by Michael Ibrahim

least 10 hours a day trekking with my guides. This was possible only because I received great strength and inspiration from the excitement I experienced each day, impressed by this unusual and marvelous environment. The



Residents' Journal reporter Michael Ibrahim (middle) with Raj Mahan (from left) and Harish Mahajan in Nepal during a tour of the country in December 2002.

# The New Cook County Hospital

by Clemolyn  
“Pennie” Brinson

The new Cook County Hospital, named after Cook County Board President John H. Stroger Jr. and located at 1901 W. Harrison St., opened its doors for service in December 2002.

The new hospital covers 1.2 million square feet, or one-and-one-half city blocks in length, and replaces the old Cook County Hospital. The new hospital cost \$551 million and was designed and built to be a more modern facility that would be better equipped to use up-to-date technology and equipment, according to Cook County officials. The Cook County Board decided that the old Cook County Hospital, built in 1914, would cost too much to renovate and wasn't designed to oper-

mostly to allow natural air in when it was too hot in the building. The new building has a temperature control system and there's no need for those gigantic fans that were used in the old building to cool the waiting area but really circulated hot air.

The emergency room, appropriately located on the first floor, is 1/3 larger than the old one, and has 75 treatment spaces. The first floor is also designed with large rooms for the specialty care clinics that will be transferred from Fantus Clinic in the near future. Most of the outpatient or ambulatory clinics will be on the first two floors. The upper floors are for inpatients.

One of the most important changes, according to Rendy Jones, is that now all the labor, delivery and pediatric care are on one floor. Now a mother can be closer to her child than she was in the old hospital. Mothers can have their newborns in the same room with them now. Jones also praised the burn unit.

“It's one of very few burn units in the city that are verified burn units,” she said. There are several waiting areas throughout the hospital's eight stories, and patients will appreciate the larger cafeteria, which seats 500 people comfortably.

Some of the new advanced technology used includes a nurses call system for patients to communicate with their nurses. And now, doctors can access x-rays and film records instantaneously via computer. In the old hospital, someone would have to bring those items to the doctors. Also, prescriptions will be handled by robot-like machines, filling prescriptions much faster than the old way, by hand.

The new hospital has a connecting parking garage. Formerly, patients would scramble to find a place to park near the hospital. Mostly, patients would park blocks away and have to walk the distance to the hospital. Now they can park in the adjacent parking garage for a nominal fee if they have an appointment.

There are wheelchairs for the patients who need them to get them to the hospital, which is accessible to persons with disabilities with automatic doors. The old hospital doors were heavy and someone would have to hold the doors open for people in wheelchairs.

Fantus Clinic, one of 30 community health centers provided by the Cook County

Bureau of Health Services, will remain standing and open for primary care services. The old Cook County Hospital as well as the Cook County Children's Hospital will be torn down in the near future.

## Why the Wait?

The biggest complaint about the old Cook County Hospital was the long wait - the wait to be seen by a doctor, and the wait to pick up medication. Will these problems be remedied in the new hospital?

Some patients say they don't expect it. They had experienced being in the new John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital and said they didn't see much of a difference.

The new John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County is in a transition period. The new hospital, open now for less than two months, is making adjustments and the waiting time isn't shorter yet. In fact, it might seem longer.

Larry Ekster, 53, said he'd waited for almost 24 hours in the new emergency room. He said he'd brought his wife in at 7 p.m. the day before and she wasn't called until 3 p.m. the next day. A 72-year-old woman who wanted her name withheld said she had waited 4 hours. She said she thought she would be seen quicker since she was hemorrhaging. She said she expected the wait to be shorter at the new hospital.

But V.J., 42, of the West Side said she'd been over at the old emergency room in Fantus Clinic and was told by a clerk she should come to the hospital because she would be seen faster. She said she waited for 5 hours to be called.

In the old Fantus Clinic emergency room, 25-year-old Unica Parker of the Northwest Side said he'd been advised by someone in the new emergency room to come to the old building to be seen faster. He said he has waited “eight long hours.” He said he'd been seen by a doctor 2 hours ago and was now waiting just to be discharged. He said he didn't expect the wait to be shorter in the new hospital since he was told it wouldn't be.

Silva Depass, 43, of 105th Street and Pulaski Avenue, and Elena Kreidals, 50, of the South Side, also said they had waited for four hours. “I usually wait seven to eight hours,” said Kreidals. “I wait 11 to 12 hours if I wait



Rendy Jones, director of communications for the Cook County Bureau of Health Services.

Photo by Clemolyn Brinson

for medication.”

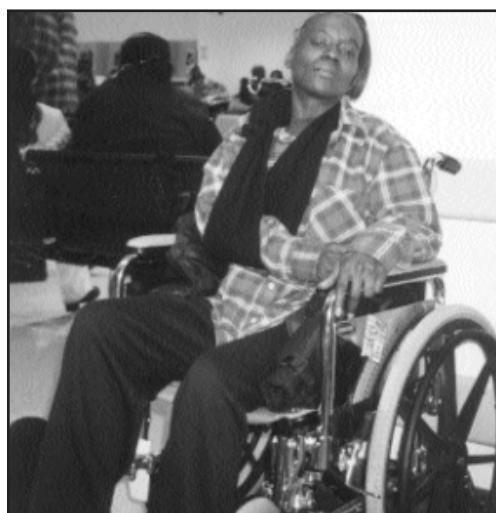
Soon after interviewing her, Kreidals' name was called. She was happy. Her friend, Silva Depass, said she wasn't expecting to be home until midnight. She said she'd been told that the wait was long. She expects that the wait at the new hospital will be shorter.

Charlean, 40, of the West Side, also had waited in the Ambulatory Emergency Clinic for five hours already. She said, comparing the two hospitals, “Both of them are full of stuff.”

She said she'd been at the new hospital earlier to discuss a mistake made. She said she expected to be there until one or two in the morning waiting on her medication. “How long can it take to put medicine in a bottle?” she asked. “The people's attitude in the pharmacy is terrible.”

According to hospital spokesperson Rendy Jones, the wait in the new hospital is due to the transition period. She added that there will be a new and more efficient system of filling prescriptions by a robot-type machine, which will fill about 200 prescriptions an hour - up to four times faster than by hand.

Jones acknowledged that the long wait at Cook County Hospital has always been a big issue for patients there. Now they can look forward to shorter waits in the waiting rooms and the pharmacy, Jones said.



This disabled lady named VJ claimed to have waited over 5 hours before being seen by doctors at the new John Stroger Cook County Hospital.

Photo by Clemolyn Brinson

ate with today's modern technology.

The name for the new hospital was unanimously voted on by the Cook County Board after longtime civil rights activist Jesse L. Jackson Sr. made a pitch.

“Jesse Jackson felt that with this new hospital opening, this would be a much more appropriate way to really recognize (Stroger) for all the work they he's done,” said Rendy Jones, director of communications for the Cook County Bureau of Health Services.

The John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital of Cook County stands eight stories tall with a basement level. It holds 464 beds total, 50 or so less beds than the old facility was designed to hold. Hospital officials explained that today's advanced technology has produced a decrease in inpatients and hospital stays as compared to almost a century ago, when the old hospital was built.

The old hospital had wards that contained up to 29 beds per ward. The new hospital has private and semi-private rooms for inpatient stay instead of wards. Each room has a private bath, unlike the old wards where the patients all shared one bathroom. And each patient has a television and telephone in their room.

Standing outside the new building, it's obvious there is a lot more window area than there was in the old building. The large windows of the new facility don't open but serve a more aesthetic purpose, whereas the windows in the old hospital served

# WALTER BURNETT, JR.

**Building Strong Communities!**

*“Our Alderman, Walter Burnett, Jr. is a leader who works for strong and stable neighborhoods, promotes economic development and fights to keep children and seniors safe in our communities. That is why I ask you to join me in voting for Walter Burnett, Jr. for 27th Ward Alderman.”*

*– Jesse White, Secretary of State*

**27TH WARD ALDERMAN**



# Each One Teach One



## Blame it on Rap Music?

by Nicholas Minor

The first question we should ask is, "What is rap music?"

Rap music is an art of expressing or causing an emotion by using a melodious combination of notes in the song form of talk or conversation. Some call it music. Some call it noise. Some may even call it the cause of many problems, a negative influence toward teens growing up.

Anything can be an influence, of course. And if anyone sees a negative influence, they make the conscious decision to either refuse or accept this negativity.

Stereotypes also play a big role in the many influences of rap music. Gang banging, drugs, alcohol, jewelry, money, cars, baggy clothes, style and fashion are some examples of hip hop stereotypes.

These items can also be influences but a person needs more than this for action. One

does not just all of a sudden go and do something they see on TV. One first has to think, "I want this," and then make a conscious decision to go and do it.

Denise Brown, who is "30ish," thinks rap music is fun and uplifting. She has eight children, and she does let them listen to rap music.

"I think any music can be negative, not exclusively rap music," she said. "I don't think rap music exclusively has a negative influence on anyone. I believe that if a young person is looking to do wrong, then any excuse like rap will do."

Nick Davis, 16, said rap has good influences on him.

"It calms me down. Like if I'm mad, it calms me down," he said. "Sometimes I can relate to what they're saying, and it just makes me feel better."

He said that if he had kids, he would let them listen to rap. He thinks teens can get positive things from rap.

"It can sometimes be negative but they don't really mean it to be," he said.

"I feel that they should listen to whatever they want, and I also feel that rap music

has a story behind it."

Terry Coleman, 42, said he used to listen to rap music "when it was clean."

"When I was listening to it, I got a lot of mixed messages like what you should and shouldn't do," he said. "But they were never violent."

His favorite rap group is the Sugar Hill Gang. He said rap music is a lot different today.

"The only time I found it negative was when NWA came out," he said.

"Nowadays, it's too negative, too much sexual content. Back then, it was fun. It was about whose flow was the smoothest, and there was a lot of break dancing. Today there's too much violence."

He has a 10-year-old daughter and says he wouldn't let her listen to hardcore rap.

"I think at a young age, it sends them mixed messages telling them what they can do, but not what the consequences are," he said.

Deon Washington, 33, said he listens to mostly old school rap like KRS-One, Gangstarr and Public Enemy as well as some new school like Nas and Notorious BIG.

He has children and does let them listen to rap. He thinks sometimes it can have a negative influence.

"My kids are not at the age where they could listen to rap music and get a positive or negative influence from it," he said. "They just hear a catchy beat or a melody and like the song."

The rapper Eminem sings, "They say music can alter moods and talk to you. Well can it load a gun for you and cock it too? Well if it can, then the next time you assault a dude, just tell the judge it was my fault and I'll get sued."

Basically, what he was saying is that music such as rap has an influence on young people, just as all music does. And yes, the influence will at times be negative. But as a society, we should know that influences should be just influences and not decision-makers.

If we believed people always acted on their influences, then we should terminate all media. But young people are not being brainwashed. We should recognize it as an influence and leave it at that. To say all rap is negative is like saying all people are ugly.

## The Meaning of Family

by Lois Lewis

What is family? What does it mean to you?

I interviewed some kids from the Rogers Park area about this topic. Shawntana Sistrunk, 11, said her family is the most important thing to her. What she looks for from her family members are good role models and someone who's outgoing and not always negative about little things. She looks for people who help her with her homework and take her places and tell her they love her.

Samuel Lewis, 8, said the most important thing in having a family is someone who loves him. He wants to have someone to help him with his homework because he said he is not a good reader. He said that's all he expects from his family and he can't complain and he loves his family.

Julius Thomas, 12, said your family members are people who care for you.

"If you need help, you can count on them and they won't turn you down," he said. "That's what I love about my family and I would also call my family my best friend."

To me, family means someone I can depend on and go to with my problems when things are not going good. Someone will always be there no matter what. I'd like to say that I love my family and my family loves me.

## Kids Raising Themselves

by Ebony Adams

When I was nine, I had to take over the responsibility of taking care of my two younger siblings. It wasn't a choice or an option; I had to do it.

My mom was too caught up in her own habits, addictions and personal life to realize that what she was doing would damage all three of her kids. In the long run, everything she did would catch up with her and hurt our lives more than hers.

I have been taking care of myself, pretty much learning how to survive as I went along, since I was nine. When I was 13, we all got split up. After we got split up, all I had to worry about was me. So I think about those situations every day. A lot of kids go through things a lot worse than I did. I try to keep my complaints to a minimum because I've seen a lot worse than what I went through.

I think kids are raising themselves nowadays because some parents have their kids at young ages and get caught up in themselves. They aren't ready to have a kid. Having a kid is a big responsibility.

A lot depends on the person and their individual situation. But overall, with each generation, I think the problem is getting worse. Kids seem to

be taking care of the other siblings more and more and the parents don't act like adults.

Rhonda Jones, 31, said, "I think that there are factors that contribute to children raising themselves. In some situations, the parents have to work sometimes two jobs in order to make ends meet. Therefore, the children are left to take care of themselves and sometimes younger siblings.

"In other situations, parents may not be able to raise children due to some sort of dependency that may have a hold of them, which leads them to not be mentally capable of doing the job."

She said that in this day and age, parents seem to have a harder time raising children "with all the ills of the world today." She feels that drug-and alcohol-dependency play the biggest part in causing these problems.

Mary Pickens, 18, said, "More kids in the projects raise themselves because they don't have positive role models and most of their mothers and fathers are strung out on drugs."

She added, "Parents are getting worse because they don't know how to talk to their kids and kids learn what they see and live around. So if no one's there or cares, then things get even worse."

She thinks that after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, it's even harder for people to find jobs and the economy is messed up. So parents give up and don't listen to their kids, making the problem even worse.

Earlene Lindsey, 77, said, "Children are raising themselves because they are born to young parents that don't know how to raise them. They

are just babies having babies.

"Parents are getting worse because there are so many [bad] influences out there that they get involved in and parents don't have time to raise them."

She thinks a lack of discipline and lack of parents taking on responsibility plays a big role, along with drugs.

She also thinks there is a problem with a lack of education and morals.

"It was different when I was growing up because the environment was different and there were more two-parent homes," she said.

Karen Davis, 39, a staff member at a group home, said, "In a lot of single-parent homes, the mother is always working and the kids are at home raising themselves. The moms are making the money to keep food on the table, the bills paid and clothes on their backs."

She said, "There is a problem with teen pregnancy and love isn't put into raising the kids. There are a lot of drugs in society and lots of parents are strung out on drugs because it's a drug society. A lot of drug babies are born. It's sad that people put drugs before the babies."

In conclusion, everybody I interviewed thinks that lots of children are raising themselves, and the biggest problem is the drug society. Everyone wants a change to this problem but it seems like no one is doing anything about it.

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## **Education In Haiti**

### **by Dimitri Juste**

Coming here to America from Haiti has been an experience for me. For anyone that doesn't know, Haiti is a poor country that shares an island in the Caribbean Sea with the Dominican Republic. Schools here are massive and heavily funded compared to schools there.

Support groups are everywhere to help those in need of education. Watching or observing this makes me remember how lucky I am to be here. But what about those back at home? Who will help them?

First off, I wanted feedback from those of Haitian origin who share the same concern. Let's take my mother, for example. She was born and raised in Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti, and had first-hand experience with its education. Her name is Mimonde Juste. This is the conversation I had with her:

"Tell me, mother, what keeps most kids from attending school in Haiti?"

She said, "The main problem is financial. I remember losing a school book, and my mother wasn't able to buy me another one."

"Is this one of the common problems in Haiti?"

Her reply was, "Yes, very much so. A lot of kids stay home to help their families, maybe with chores or farming. So most of the time, they miss too many

days and have to drop out."

"What do you think could be done about this?"

She said, "A lot could be done. I think this country should fund more positive things than a war."

After this interview with my mother, I sat back and reflected that it's true that governments spend more on destroying than building. Sacrificing education for war is needless.

My second interview was with a business man who sends money to Haiti through families in America. Jean-Pierre answered a series of questions for me.

I said, "How are you doing, sir? Let me ask your opinion on how we support our young ones with their education in Haiti."

He said, "I'm fine, thank you. Well, my main views and main concern is with the more fortunate families. The ones that were lucky to come here should make sure that their families back home are helped."

What can the government do for our loved ones back home? He said, "Send money. Send teachers, those who are willing to train. What we need is outside help and guidance to give a hand to those teachers."

I thanked Jean-Pierre for his thoughtful words. Everyone should take part in helping with the education in Haiti. Haiti really needs outside help. The one way for them to succeed is to be educated. Anywhere that needs help should get outside help.

## **Depression Among Teens**

### **by Kenneth Watts**

Depression is an illness for which at this time we have no cure. The best you can do is learn how to live with it.

We need to know how to stop it before it becomes a serious problem, especially for many teens in today's day and age. There's more pressure on teens today than in the past because of problems with the schools, the threat of war, the economy, and problems in the neighborhood.

I have suffered from depression and realized that it caused problems in my life. It affected my relationships and my family. I dropped out of school and got myself arrested. It affected how I dealt with life on a day-to-day basis.

Therefore, I had to seek help. I'm now working on living my life the best way I can.

People must realize the tell-tale signs of depression. Every day, 700 people between age 15 and 24 attempt suicide, according to the web site [www.freeterm.com](http://www.freeterm.com), and an estimated 5,000 teens commit suicide every year in the U.S. due to depression, making it the third leading cause of death for this age group.

Half of all Americans at some point in their life

will have mental health problems. The most common one is depression.

There are six basic signs of depression. They are: social problems, school/work problems, problems with sleep and appetite, behavior such as running away and being sad and moody, substance abuse and avoiding one's feelings.

Research has shown that a combination of counsel-

**If a parent doesn't have private insurance,  
then the only place a teen can go is to a  
community mental health clinic.**

ing and medication is very effective in treating depression. But there are not enough counselors for teens in schools to deal with depression and with budget cuts, this has gotten worse.

If a parent doesn't have private insurance, then the only place a teen can go is to a community mental health clinic. But these facilities often have very long waiting lists. So where do you turn?

Here are some ways to soothe the pain of depression: Write your feelings on paper. Spend time talking to someone you can trust. Spend time letting your parents know how you feel. Read poems. Stretch by doing yoga. Express your anger by breathing in and out 10 times.

I asked a student named Mary Pickens if she has ever known anyone who was depressed.

"Yes, a friend I went to school with. Her mother didn't have custody of her but her grandmother did and her grandmother always downed her," she said.

"My friend tried to slit her wrist and wanted to hang herself. It is obvious to see that when kids live around this type of environment where no one cares, then they will sense that and they won't care either."

I interviewed a psychotherapist named Brenda Barr of the Howard Area Community Center about what someone can do to help a depressed friend.

"Start with talking to their family or the family's doctor, and ask where they can go to get help," she said.

"Encourage the child to talk to counselors, doctors and family members that they feel they can trust, so the problem can get fixed before it gets worse."

Many young lives are at risk today and young people are leaving us just because of mental health problems. But there are many people who can help. The number one people to turn to are your family. But if that is not an option, you can always call the Crisis Hotline at 773-508-1600 or other numbers listed in your local phone book.

If you or someone you know is suffering from depression, don't be afraid to call this hotline or use another way to treat depression. Don't wait until it's too late and don't let anyone else become part of the 700 a day who attempt suicide.

## **Is Justice Served? by Mia Dunlap**

It's illegal for one to vote until at least age 18. It's illegal for one to buy alcohol until at least age 21, and it's even illegal for one to enlist in the military until age 18.

However, it's legal for one under the age of 18 to do an adult sentence and be sent to an adult prison. Because youths are limited to certain privileges until age 18, doesn't that suggest that one under the age of 18 is not mature enough to make certain decisions and unfit physically and mentally to carry out certain actions?

So, is someone under the age of 18 able to maintain themselves in an adult prison with men and women? Is this justice or just a way to get money for prison-building and increase statistics to make certain groups of people look bad?

According to the director of the National Center for Juvenile Justice, by the end of 1996, 49 states

passed laws authorizing the prosecution or sentencing of children as young as 14 as adults. When this information was told to a few students at Hyde Park Academy in Chicago, their first question was, "Will a law be passed that children as young as 14 have the right to decide who their leader should be for the next four years of their life?"

Chicago trial lawyer Jim Chapman was interviewed on how he feels about youth being tried as adults. Chapman doesn't feel that there will be any change in the system any time soon.

"Things are getting worse," he said.

He also feels that parents play a big part in dealing with their children. He agrees with the adage, "It takes a village to raise a child."

Statistics say that trying youths as adults has become a racial issue. However, Chapman said, "It's more of a class issue than a racial issue." He says people of color and poor white people both get the shorter end of the stick.

Indiana, Vermont and South Dakota allow 10-year-olds to be prosecuted as adults. In other states, the leg-

islatures have passed laws saying three strikes and you're an adult.

Alice Pradum, a student who won second place in an essay contest entitled "Should Teens be Tried as Adults," said, "According to the law, we aren't allowed to be out past 10:30 p.m. in most parts of Chicago. We're not allowed to drink alcohol, see an R-rated movie without someone over 18, or get any kinds of piercings or tattoos without parental consent. The government wants to put all of these restrictions on teens but when a teenager commits a crime, they think it's OK to suddenly stop treating them like a child and punish them like they were an adult."

However, the third place winner of this contest agreed with the system. She wrote, "If a child is adult enough to do a severe crime, then they should be adult enough to do the time."

Chapman suggests there be more parental involvement with children. He thinks that everyone should be involved with taking care of youths at an early age. Then, when they get older, they'll know the difference between right and wrong.

## Gang Violence in Schools by Clarivel Gonzalez

Has anyone ever tried to stop the violence in Chicago public schools?

It's a fact that young adults are facing more and more violence in schools, and it's taking them to the point where they no longer want to attend school.

I did some research about Chicago public schools' gang violence. In 1989, 15 percent of students reported "street gangs" in their schools. By 1993, 35 percent of students said "fighting" gangs were present in their schools. This was 10 years ago; imagine how much gang violence has increased in public schools today.

I interviewed four students, Gabriela Garcia, 19, JG, 16, AB, 17 and Dwayne P., 20, and a parent, Celia Rodriguez, 42, about the problem of gangs in schools.

I asked if they are still in school.

"No, I completed my GED course at Wright College after I attended Sullivan High School for a year," said Garcia.

Dwayne graduated from Senn High School, and the other two had gone to Sullivan in the past.

When asked if they are in a gang, AB said, "I prefer not to answer that question."

Dwayne said, "No. I used to be in one but you grow out of that nonsense."

Garcia said, "No. It never drew my attention."

JG said, "No. Though I was going to join one so the kids at school could really bother me for a reason and so I could have backup, in case I needed it."

When asked if they hang with gang bangers, JG said, "Once in a while. I can't hang with them too much because then they'd think I'm one of them."

AB said, "Yeah, they're my boys. I'm not going to stop talking to them just because they belong to a gang."

Dwayne said, "Yeah. I still talk to some of my boys. But not all of them because most of them are locked up and like two are dead."

away," said JG.

"They want you to fight one another," said AB. "They want you to be enemies, not friends."

"Ha. They were the last people we were worried about," said Dwayne.

When asked if they had ever been so mad they would kill, their answers varied.

"Nope. I'm not that crazy yet," said JG.

"Yeah," said AB. "Because, man, you get tired of being picked on. There's always that person who won't leave you alone until you handle him. Then he

hood, like 26<sup>th</sup> Street, he'd get treated too, even worse," said AB.

They all think violence has gotten worse. I asked if it's growing more in the schools or streets.

"It has grown more in school. Little grammar school kids are in gangs now," said Garcia. "There's more killing on the streets too, though."

"It's growing and it's going to keep growing, in both areas," said JG.

"I think it's growing in both. But more in the streets," said AB.

Dwayne said he thinks violence is increasing but that it's not all related to gangs.

Rodriguez described how her son was not safe at school.

"My son would come home beat up. What's safe about that?" she asked.

"He wouldn't ever say anything. He was one of those types who would keep everything to himself."

She said she planned to move to help avoid the violence.

"We found a house on the South Side in a very nice neighborhood," she said. "A week before moving, he didn't come home one night. It was a Friday. I had this feeling...that I wouldn't want any mother to feel."

"That night, cops came over around 8:15. I still remember. I knew something was wrong and I started crying. My son had been shot in the head. He was a good boy. He was only 16."

School gang violence is not a joke. It killed Rodriguez's son and many more. It's an issue that should be handled. If schools are not safer for us students, where is safe?

### School gang violence is not a joke. It's an issue that should be handled. If schools are not safer for us students, where is safe?

They said they sometimes feel in danger at school.

"Before, when I used to go to school, I felt like I was in danger," said JG.

"That's the whole reason why I dropped out. It was getting too crazy. Blacks were beating on every Hispanic and some of them were my friends."

"Yeah, but it's OK. You have to stand up for what you believe in," said AB.

"At first, I was afraid. But after I got to know people, it was OK," said Dwayne.

They all said the police were no good in helping solve the gang problem.

"Either they ignore you or they walk

finally gets the point."

"No. Not to that point. But if I had to do it, I would," said Dwayne. "To save my life, I would do anything."

I asked whether they think gangs are a racial issue.

"Not precisely. But it's always been Blacks with Blacks and Hispanics with Hispanics," Garcia said. "It's very rare you see them mixed together."

"Yeah, because at Sullivan, they would just bother us Hispanics," said JG. "We look Mexican so they just assume we are (members of one particular gang)."

"I think so. At school, they'd be treating on Mexicans. But it's like, if a Black guy went to a Mexican neighbor-

## Ernie Terrell: A Great Boxer Looks Back by Tiffany Young

Ernie Terrell was a great boxer in his time.

He graduated from Farragut High School in Chicago and grew up on the South Side of Chicago.

"I became a boxer because Joe Louis was my influence. He was the only hero I knew," said Terrell. "Every

time he fought, the whole world would stop. That had an effect on me."

He started boxing at the age of 12 in Chicago, in the 1950s. His first fight was against Norman Bolden in Detroit. He also fought other people like Cleveland Williams, Eddie Machan, Zora Foley, Doug Jones, Bob Foster and George Chavalo.

In 1965, he won the World Boxing Association (WBA) championship against Eddie Machan. He lost it in 1967 against Muhammad Ali in a 15-round decision. He thought he was as good as Ali. He felt like he was fighting the best around.

Terrell traveled a lot for fights. He

traveled to Houston, New York City, Los Angeles, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Detroit and lots of other places. He fought in Madison Square Garden in New York City.

"I went to the gym every day, where I trained with great fighters that were known for making (training) fighters," he said.

The idea of training was to build up energy. It was a lot of sacrificing. His trainer was Frank Nelson. He also trained with a professional trainer named Sam Solomon in Philadelphia and attended a training camp in New Jersey. The camp motivated him to become a better boxer. He was boxing for 20 years.

"But boxing wasn't the only thing I was popular in," he said.

Other than boxing, he also sang. He had a well-known group called Ernie Terrell and the Heavyweights for 13 years. They sang at the Fountain Blue in Miami, in Las Vegas and other places.

Now Terrell is married with two kids who are now grown. He promotes fights and runs a janitorial service.

"The thing that's so unique about boxing is that when you are boxing champion, you're talking the whole world," he said.

## What Has Changed Since 9-11? by Rashawn Coleman

On Sept. 11, 2001, terrorists flew planes into the Twin Towers in New York City. More than one year later, how

has it affected our country and the people of Chicago? Even though it shocked the world, most people I interviewed said it didn't affect them that much.

"I felt the same as how I feel every day," said Josh, 16, about Sept. 11. "I didn't know anyone in those buildings, though I do feel bad for the people who had family in those buildings."

Lois Lewis, 20, said she was shocked at what happened.

"I did not ever think in a million years something like that would happen," she said.

When she heard the news, "I was outside playing basketball with my friends. I felt real bad. I was upset because I was thinking about all of the people that were in the building."

"My girl said she knew a couple of people that worked there," said Jason, 22. "Me and my girl talked about it for a while. I felt kind of bad, because a lot of people lost family. But it did not really affect me that much."

"It hurt me a little but not that much," agreed Katie, 47. "I didn't talk to anyone about it and I didn't feel I had to."

I didn't know anyone in the buildings."

"It did not bother me much," said Shawnda, 19. "It wasn't in Chicago so I was OK. But I did feel for the people who were in the buildings."

When asked whether they think terrorists would ever strike Chicago, Lewis said, "I don't know. They just might."

In conclusion, I don't think life is any different than it was before Sept. 11. I don't think anything has changed. People are just living their lives as they were.

## Teen Rape

### by AnQuella Jackson

What is rape?

At least four women somewhere are being raped as you read this, according to statistics.

You might be wondering: Why should I care if this isn't happening to me? Well, it could happen to you, a friend or a family member. And victims of rape aren't just women. Rape happens in homes, schools, jails and everywhere else.

The most common form of rape is date rape. Eighty-five percent of all sexual assaults against high school and college students are committed by someone they know.

Date rapists often use drugs like Rohypnol, which is often called the "forget pill," a low-cost drug sold at less than \$5 per tablet, or GHB, better known as liquid ecstasy, which can sometimes kill its victims. Combined with alcohol, this drug can induce blackout, memory loss and decreased resistance, making a woman more vulnerable to date rape.

A study by the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that 36 percent of college women have been forced into

unwanted sex. Many are unwilling to report the attack. The study said that 64 percent of rapes and 80 percent of attempted rapes are not reported to the police. Only five percent of date rape victims tell the police.

There are many effects of rape, including pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS, depression and low self-esteem. Victims of rape continue to have fear of men throughout their whole lives, and men don't

your drink down and leave it unattended, even to go to the bathroom, and try to stay out of dark streets at night and take self-defense classes.

"Ninety-five percent of women who are raped think it is their fault or that they should have done something to avoid it," she said. "And two out of seven men have been raped, though they might not even know they were raped."

LaSheila Jackson, a student at William H. Ray Elementary School, said a friend of hers was raped.

"I felt sad," she said. "It could have been me. I think it happens a lot but people don't talk about it because they are scared."

She said she thinks the police should change the way they treat rape

**"I try not to be out at night by myself because I know what could happen to little girls. It is the most biggest fear next to death"**

- LaSheila Jackson, a student at William H. Ray Elementary School

even report the crime because they don't realize they can be raped since they are men.

What can we do to change this? Rape has been around for centuries. It's not something new. But is this something that must happen to every generation of young women in the world?

I interviewed a rape crisis counselor about ways to avoid rape. She said to be wary about accepting drinks from anyone you don't know well or trust, don't put

victims.

"When my friend got raped, she said the police asked her why she was wearing a little dress and I guess that made her feel bad," she said.

She said rape is a big fear for all women and girls.

"I try not to be out at night by myself because I know what could happen to little girls," she said. "It is the most biggest fear next to death."

## Teens Renting Apartments

### by Esther Wolf

It is different for a teen to rent an apartment on their own. A teen needs a job and good credit to rent an apartment. It's hard for a teen to get good credit. The landlord wants you to work for a long time and have a good work record.

When I was 17 years old, I tried to rent a lot of apartments. Everywhere that I went, the landlord told me that I was too young and had no credit. At the time, I couldn't get any credit because of my age.

I had only been working for four months. Because I couldn't find an apartment, I had to stay home for another year.

A 22-year-old woman who lives on the West Side, who asked that her name not be used, said it was hard for her to get an apartment.

"At the age of 17, I tried to rent an apartment but the apartments that I went to, the landlord said I had to be on the waiting list," she said.

"The reason I had to be on the waiting list was that I was trying to start off with a low income."

She also said that credit was a problem.

"The landlord asked if I had a credit check," she said.

An 18-year-old woman who also lives on the West Side and asked that her name not be used said it was not really hard for her to get an apartment once she turned 18.

"At the age of 17, I kept trying to rent an apartment but the landlord kept telling me that she needed to see proof of my good credit," she said. "As soon as I reached 18, I got a phone so I could get credit."

She kept trying to get and buy things in her name to get credit.

"As soon as I had some credit established, I went back to the landlord and they gave me the apartment and I didn't have any problems with the landlord," she said.

Michael Tate, a 37-year-old landlord who lives on the West Side, said he nor-

mally rents to teens who are 18 or older and have credit.

"I like to know how they will pay their rent," he said. "I want them to be clean and at least 18 years old. They need to know how to keep an apartment clean and also know how to pay the bills on time. I don't like people who sit on the front porch but you can sit on the back porch."

In conclusion, to get an apartment, you have a much better chance if you are 18 or older. You also need a job and you need to make sure you have good credit. From the landlord's side, you need to keep the apartment clean and in good shape.

## Relationship Problems

### by James Wesley

Why do men and women have trouble with their relationships? I interviewed a lot of people about this topic and found out that a lot of people have the same problems, including lying, cheating and sexual problems.

While interviewing a person on the street, I asked why men lie so much. He replied, "Just to see how far they can go."

I also asked why women stay with men who lie or treat them badly. I interviewed a girl named Monica, 25, who said, "That's just the way it is."

Ebony, age 18, said, "Because they believe what their boyfriend or so-called boyfriend says."

"What will you take or not take?" said Shay. "It depends how much you care about that person."

Toya, 19, said it depends how long you and that person have been together.

Eric, 27, said, "It just depends how hard and solid your relationship is with your spouse or partner," meaning some relationships are strong enough to survive problems.

Lee, a 9-year-old boy who has seen his mother and father fight a lot, said he asked them why and they said

they "just have confrontations, don't worry."

I also asked why some relationships turn violent. Carmen, 30, said, "You should not let it get that far. That's why people break up so much these days."

Brittany, 17, said, "People are already in so deep that they cannot get away."

Lying is another big problem in relationships. Someone I interviewed on the street said, "Women lie the best but men lie more often."

In conclusion, both sexes have things they need to deal with and get over. People should try to get along with one another. Rather than fighting, ask your partner the question, how you can make things better for the both of you.

## Guardian

### by Epignemio Rafaela

I'm a love guardian because I care, cry and I sweat blood for those I love. The raza is important to me and I'm the guardian to the raza. A guardian is faithful to his family, friends and girlfriends. I'm the guardian that no matter what, I'm there for those who need me and want me. I'm a guardian angel that looks out for

the ones I care for.  
I'm the angel without wings, but sometimes I fly higher than birds.  
I prefer a kiss and a hug to some money and a car.

### Answer Me

You told me that I'm not serious  
Because you think I play too much  
You might think that I'm still a child  
That doesn't know what he wants  
You might think that I'm immature or  
maybe ignorant  
You might think that I'm inexperienced  
Because I don't know about love but I do

know pain  
I feel weak and I don't know why  
It might be my immaturity,  
my ignorance or my inexperience  
I hope you tell me one day  
how you feel about me

But not as a friend, as a man  
- Dedicated to MDH

### Contestame

Me dijiste que no hablo en serio  
Por que piensas que siempre juego  
Pensaras que todavia soy un nino

Que no sabe lo que quiere  
Pensaras que soy inmaduro o talvez ignorante  
Pensaras que soy ingenuo por que no se de  
Amor pero conozco muy bien el dolor  
Me siento mal y no se por que  
Talvez es mi inmadurez, mi ignorancia o mi ingenuidad  
Espero que tu me diras algun dia  
Que sientes hacia mi  
Pero no veas como amigo, sino como hombre  
- Dedicado a MDH

# Positive People 2003

## by Bobby Watkins Circulation/Advertising Manager

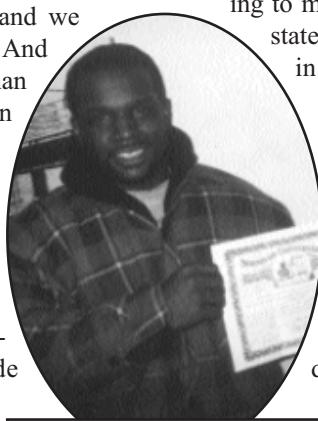
Well, the holidays are over and we have started the new year. And what better way to begin than by talking about some positive residents in the Chicago Housing Authority.

To begin with, we have a single parent who has been a resident for some 30 years in Ida B. Wells and has raised both his children; one is in college and the other is in the military. Leroy Square has been involved in many things in his development. He is involved in South Side Empowerment Zone work force development and also has two businesses of his own: Leroy's Painting and Decorating and Leroy Square and Associates, subcontractor to social service agency the Abraham Lincoln Centre.

He has also worked with several youth groups in the development as well as the nonprofit group Citizens Information Service (CIS). He is also the cofounder of social service provider Ujima in Ida B. Wells. I would just like to state, keep up the positive work, Leroy, and congratulations on your upcoming marriage. Much happiness to you.

### Lloyd Haywood

A resident of Stateway Gardens and member of the Local Advisory Council, Haywood also is a former captain of the tenant patrol and has worked with many of the contractors in the development. He has volunteered to work with youth initiatives as well as many other programs in the development.



**Stateway Gardens resident Lloyd Haywood**  
Photo by Bobby Watkins



**Wentworth Gardens resident Kael Jones**  
Photo by Bobby Watkins

He is one of those residents you find who is ready to help, whatever the cause. He also delivers Residents' Journal.

Lloyd is also trying to start his own resident-owned business and is part of the working group with the Plan for Transformation. It is good to see positive young men helping to make the change in CHA. So I would like to state, keep up the good work and stay strong in the struggle to protect public housing.

### Kael Jones and Thomas Elliott

Now we have two very young men from Wentworth Gardens. Both grew up in the development and have been residents for more than 20 years. Kael Jones and Thomas Elliott both received their engineer's license on Jan. 6. Jones and Elliott were both selected to be engineer trainees by McKinley Madgett, the chief engineer at Wentworth Gardens, who took an interest in these two young men when they were working as janitors. Later, they became maintenance mechanics with the resident management corporation of Wentworth Gardens.

Madgett and others saw them as young men who wanted more than to just hang out on the street corners. So after being encouraged to apply for trainee positions and with the approval of the resident management corporation, they then took classes sponsored by Local #399 Operating Engineers Union. This program is under the leadership of Local #399 member Brian Hickey, who also took an interest in these two young men to better enhance their skills. They were awarded certificates of comple-

tion of high pressure steam boiler operation, basic refrigeration/air conditioning and basic electricity. They had to maintain a 'C' average in order to stay in this program and were closely monitored by John Davis, Local #399's business manager, Haley Amey, the chair of the Wentworth Gardens Resident Management Corporation, and

Madgett. Keep up the good work, young men. We need more people like these who took time out with these young men so that we will all have a brighter future.

### Mary Wiggins

Mary Wiggins is a Chicago Housing Authority resident, president of the Central Advisory Council and also president of Washington Park Homes. Wiggins shows strong leadership qualities and also has a warm and caring personality.

I believe Wiggins will bring the CAC board back together and, with the help of her executive committee, the board will come together as one and in unity for the benefit of the residents. If the training that took place at the recent CAC retreat in Bloomington is put to good use, everybody will work with each other the way they did at the retreat, will strive to get residents more involved and get out and fight against the U.S. Congress and our legislators, who we put in office to take a stand for public housing.

Let's all get together, go back to marching on Washington, D.C., and show that not only is the CAC on one accord but the Local Advisory Councils and its residents are as well. President Wiggins, you and the board keep up the fight, and let's keep our residents housed.

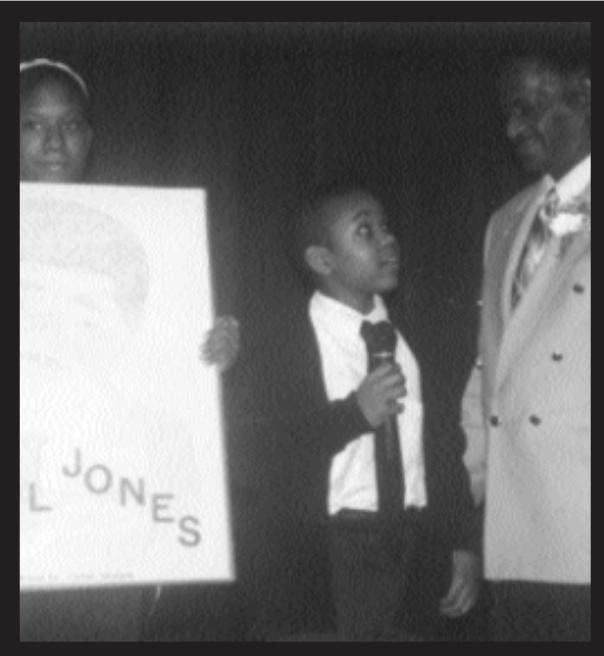


**Wentworth Gardens resident Thomas Elliott**  
Photo by Bobby Watkins



**Washington Park LAC President Mary Wiggins**  
Photo by Bobby Watkins

## In The News



In the left photo, newly elected Illinois Senate President Emil Jones Jr. with students at Shoop Academy of Math, Science and Technology after an assembly, where students re-enacted his inaugural ceremony. Sen. Jones was a former student of the Shoop Elementary School. In the middle photo, U.S. President George W. Bush mingles with the crowd after his speech on the nation's economy in January at the Chicago Economic Club. In the photo to the right, CHA CEO Terry Peterson talks about redevelopment during the groundbreaking ceremony at Westhaven Park, where new replacement housing will be built for Henry Horner residents. Also pictured are Horner LAC President Mamie Bone (from left), Ald. Madeline Haithcock (2), CHA Commissioner Earnest Gates, other city officials, CHA Board Chairman Sharon Gist Gilliam (second from right), and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Assistant Secretary Michael Liu.

Photo to the left by Beauty Turner. Middle and right photos by Mary C. Johns

# Harold Ickes News

by Jacqueline Thompson

With miles of newly emptied spaces and buildings rapidly continuing to come down, Chicago Housing Authority residents are uneasy to say the least. There are few success stories about relocation filtering down to those of us in the Harold L. Ickes Homes who are waiting and wondering just when the dreaded wrecking ball will hit our homes. True, the dismantling scheduling has been published for years.

However, due to past experiences, we know plans have a way of going away. Horses have been known to be changed in mid-stream.

The residents of Ickes are still struggling to live decently before we have to relocate. Three months ago, the doors to the stairwells were removed. Two months ago, the roughed up edges of the empty door jams were patched up. Now, three months after the doors were removed, the coldest winter temperatures in years are sending frigid air drafts up the stairwells. We can only wonder when and if there will be replacement doors for the stairwell.

Gloria Williams, Local Advisory Council president of Ickes, did tell this reporter six months ago that all the hallways were to be fixed up, with new floor tiles, painted walls and doors. Well, not yet. We wait.

Management tends to some of our concerns in a big way. While large rodents frighten and threaten the health of the families whose job it is to pull the packed refuse from the incinerator base in the rodent-infested incinerator rooms, management lays out poison to exterminate the offending problem but fails to notify the residents.

Well, I guess they think we will know soon enough when the stench of 20 or 30 dead rodents alarms everyone and janitors complain about the unhealthy task of ridding the building of the carcasses.

Twenty years ago, we lost our laundry rooms. Through the ensuing years, there have been floods of suds and dirty water from the apartments of residents who desire to have clean clothes and linens. The floods have ruined neighboring apartments when clogged pipes re-route the laundry water into neighboring sinks that overflow on the floors and rugs.

But now, there's hope at the end of the tunnel. I'm told management has reported that the two large laundry rooms being restored only lack the final touches - new floor tiles, cabinets and painted walls. The laundry machines have been on the premises for over three years. Again we wait.

And then there's the parking situation. I have gone along, forced to park my car in a place not designated but available. Since the new school has taken up so much space in Ickes, there are no parking places for residents of 2250-2310 and 2230 South State streets.

In the morning, I find myself looking out of my kitchen window to see if I will be able to play the game successfully, enough to leave my space and go on about my business.

So what do we do?

We all play the game of chess for parking. If you find a decent place on a huge slab of concrete that used to be a sprinkler for small children, then you park there. Never mind the same place every time. Just find a place. You may find an opening to leave the concrete slab and you may not. You may have to wait 15 to 30 minutes for someone to leave and create an opening for you to exit. It's all so confusing, like chess if you don't know how to play.

Here again, management has reported, "It is in the plan to correct this problem."

But when? Nobody seems to know. Drivers cannot park on State Street. It's a snow route. We can't even park on the new 23rd Street, the police officers told us, while we attempted to leave the area one morning. "We may hit a child," the officers said.

So there's no parking at the curb. So we struggle through muddy surroundings and the concrete slabs. Then we track the mud into the building, into the elevator, down the hall and into our apartments. We struggle to take off our



Jacqueline Thompson

filthy boots, sit down after that and again we wait for a change for the better.

Even though the gloomy circumstances of relocation, burial plans, muddy parking hysteria and age-old flooding seem to overshadow the day-to-day existence of the residents of Harold Ickes Homes, many remarkable things have occurred. For one, a most unlikely hero has emerged, though quietly.

It's no secret that all the high-rise buildings in CHA public housing have young men who day-to-day stand in the lobbies and seem to make loitering their life's career. So what do the residents do?

We go on about our business, hoping no more gunshots are fired as we pass through the lobby and breathing a sigh of relief as we reach our destination.

Well, one morning early, close to 7 a.m., two shots rang out, the sound clearly coming from the lobby. As I made ready to leave home for the day, I listened for more shots, trying to decide what to do, stay in my apartment or brave it out and leave as I usually do at 7:15 a.m.

Well, looking out of my window and hearing the emergency medical wagon arrive with a police escort, I felt safe enough to leave. Upon arriving on the first floor and crossing the empty lobby, I saw one of the regular standees being put into the ambulance on a stretcher.

Naturally, I inquired about the incident and I learned that a man with a gun came into the lobby and aimed it at one young man. But before he fired, our hero stepped in front of the targeted person and caught two bullets, both in the legs.

This time, no one died. Our unlikely hero has since left the hospital and is recuperating at home. I can appreciate his courage and bravery.

## Good News

The very best news of all comes from the National Teachers Academy, the newly built school where the children who live in Ickes Homes have the opportunity to be exposed to a cutting edge technological education just because they are who they are and live where they live.

On Jan. 13, I interviewed the principal of the school, Linda Ford. When the representatives of the Chicago Public Schools first came to Ickes to explain the plans for the new school, there was no doubt that the job of creating the edifice, the curriculum, with just the right interior and a highly qualified staff, would be a phenomenal undertaking.

The building was completed last year. And one week after the fall semester began, I asked for an interview. However, Ford asked this reporter to wait a couple of months and then come to her, and I did.

RJ: It's three and a half months later. Are you ready to exhale?

LF: Yes, funny you should ask me that because actually, I'm able to catch my breath, a second breath, and exhale now. I was able to exhale the first time during the latter part of October.

RJ: So, are your enrollments at the expected level?

LF: No. Not yet. We'd hoped to have 850. However, to date, we only have 640 for a beginning. We're moving on.

RJ: Are the students who have unfounded negative reputations settling in to the methods of discipline and behavior requirements?

LF: Yes. The children now know what the values are in the new school. In September, everyone had to reflect on their past behavior. But now, they are beginning to move forward.

RJ: So, can you say that the discipline among your students is leveling out or is it all uphill?

LF: Leveling out and going down. We have started a series of parent meetings so we can all, faculty and parents, use the same language with the children.

RJ: How is the parents' participation program going?

LF: Well, the first six or seven parent volunteers have gone through the process.

Right now, they are looking at different parent groups to choose from or the possibility of creating their own organization.

RJ: Are the students taking swimming classes?

LF: A lottery was held for enrollment following the

board rules. There are 48 spots and our targeted preference is for teenage mothers.

For as much as this reporter has been waiting breathlessly for evidence of the special involvement our children will experience, I too have been able to exhale and relax upon learning the gratifying reality of a well-run educational experience for Harold Ickes children and all others who reside within the school neighborhood boundaries.

As our interview came to a close, the head of the technology department raised the value of the school curriculum by sharing with this reporter an unbelievable program that took place within the school from September to Dec. 20, 2002.

Nineteen survivors from a field of 30 applicants took part in a Dell Tech Know program and learned how to take apart a computer, put it back together and, for future necessity, upgrade it for any new features that may come along. They passed the course working in teams of two. They got to keep a computer for themselves. They earned a certificate and a tool kit to service their computers at a special ceremony.

Someone may have said it couldn't be done but they would have been wrong.

But the fat lady has not sung yet. And she very well may never sing at the National Teachers Academy.

Black History Month is getting more and more publicity and more and more acceptance in our community. It would have been impossible and inconceivable for the National Teachers Academy to miss the joy and excitement of celebrating this annual event.

For their expression of pride and achievement in acknowledgement of the firm and lasting truth of Black history, the school chose to put on a play titled "Footsteps of the King," written and directed by Catherine A. Williams.

Thirty-one students worked diligently many days after school to put on a spectacular dramatic portrayal of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. from the time he was presented by his father shortly after birth to the time he made his dynamic "I have a dream" speech in Washington, D.C.

For a group of grade school students, that was quite an unusual choice for expression. However, the adults who worked with the youthful thespians pulled off a first-class performance.

Every phrase of King's life was highlighted and acted with skill and intelligence. I interviewed Keith Hampton, age 10, who played the role of Dr. King:

RJ: How do you like playing the role of Dr. King?

KH: I feel that by showing what he did before he died is important for my friends to see.

RJ: Where did you learn so much about him?

KH: In social studies.

RJ: Do you know what the prize stands for?

KH: Yes. It goes to someone who has made a significant difference in the way people fight to get civil rights, which is not by fighting, but to stay peaceful.

Well, this reporter can express some serious pride in being allowed to make this uplifting report about the very fair experience our children are getting in the new curriculum.

If you are so fortunate, try and get a visit. You will never be sorry you did.



Students of the National Teachers Academy perform a skit depicting the life of Dr. Martin Luther King during a 1960s protest in honor of Black History Month.

Photo by Jacqueline Thompson

# Stop The Violence

by Cenabeth Cross

## Ogden Courts Management Woes

In this article, I'll continue to describe the deplorable conditions we live in at Ogden Courts.

There are two buildings in Ogden Courts at 2610 and 2710 W. Ogden Ave. Our buildings are only seven stories high. This means they won't be torn down in the transformation of the CHA complexes. I learned this at the last meeting we had to meet our new manager. They finally fixed the second opening to the lobby. They fixed up many empty apartments but they rented them to new tenants. Now they are fixing the offices; there is a sign on the management office door saying same.

We have had a lot of meetings lately. Among the many complaints voiced at these recent meetings, tenants focused on the water quality and the water damage. People also complained about issues I have written about in past articles, about children with lead in their bodies and people with asthma caused by the mold from the water seepage from the roofs.

The water was shut off on Dec. 12, 2002 for over 2 hours. It has been shut off 3 times since. We get little warning, sometimes just a quick knock on our door.

Latresha Green, Ogden Courts' Local Advisory Council president, had a tenant meeting on Dec. 16. Not many people showed up and it wasn't very productive. Mostly, tenants and management officials traded accusations. Management officials said our children are the ones messing up the plumbing by putting objects down the drains. One manager said the janitors were finding toothbrushes in the pipes and reminded us that we would be charged for any job done on our apartments.

They passed out a paper explaining the terms and conditions of our new contract.

One tenant asked when the playground would be fixed so the kids would have a place to play, away from the dealers and outside of the apartments. At a prior meeting, management officials mentioned that Mt. Sinai Hospital would help fix the playground. But at this meeting, management officials weren't able to say when the playground would be finished. They also couldn't comment on the new windows that were supposed to be a priority, after a three-year-old boy fell to his death from a 6th floor window last year.

The management official asked us to defer all complaints to another meeting or to come see her in the office. At this meeting, she said she wanted to go over the new contract. She said she would be strict with the lease provisions.

With that remark, one lady said her records were messed up. She said she was incorrectly noted as being 3 months behind in her rent. The manager told her to come to the office and talk to her later. I had another meeting I had to attend. I had my hand up for 15 minutes but no one called and let me say anything, so I left.



Stains on this floor are from water that was running down the wall of the CHA Service Connector's office at 2650 W. Ogden Ave., shown here in this recent photo.

Photo by Cenabeth Cross



Cenabeth Cross

We had a meeting on Jan. 9 to meet yet another new manager. The notice read "mandatory, tomorrow, tenant meeting, 2650 Ogden #104." It went on to read that "if you plan on keeping your unit, then plan to attend this meeting, thank you, manager, Angela Sims Abiodun."

The heat was off for three weekends recently. One young girl came around on Jan. 13 with a petition for us to sign.

On Jan. 22, my toilet was running over as it has many times. I ran downstairs (the elevator doesn't work most of the time) to the office to get help. The person in the office said the men were unloading lumber at the next building and she would

have to call someone to come over. I ran back upstairs and wiggled the handle like the lady had showed me the first time. The toilet ran over into the apartment under me.

Fifteen minutes later, I walked back down to tell the office worker that I had stopped the overflow myself. I've lost a lot of towels and rugs this way.

The water quality affects different tenants in different ways. One lady has papers from Mt. Sinai Hospital which document the effect of the building's water to her children. She asked me if my stomach hurt a lot. I replied yes, and she implied it was from the water.

After Sept. 11, I tried to store water to have on hand, just in case. I filled as many pop and juice bottles as I could under the sink. After a couple of months, I found that the water smelled so bad that I had to pour all of the water into the toilet.

If I stay away from my apartment for a few days, the water runs a brownish color until you run it for a while.

The couple who lived in apartment 509 called the Board of Health because they had maggots coming out of the floor. Shortly after the couple complained, I saw the manager and an inspector. They asked me if maggots had come into my apartment. I told them I had sealed the holes in my bathroom with ready-to-use cement. The inspector remarked that they wouldn't be able to enter my apartment, so they left.

The couple asked me to look, and I saw a couple of dead maggots around a hole in the floor. They have moved since then.

## Sounds of Violence

Ogden Courts is right across the street from Mt. Sinai Hospital. We hear the sounds of violence and death daily, 24 hours, seven days a week. There are the fire trucks screaming, police sirens, and the sounds of ambulances.

The dealers are shouting all day selling their wares. And there are the sounds of people fighting and the occasional gunshots.

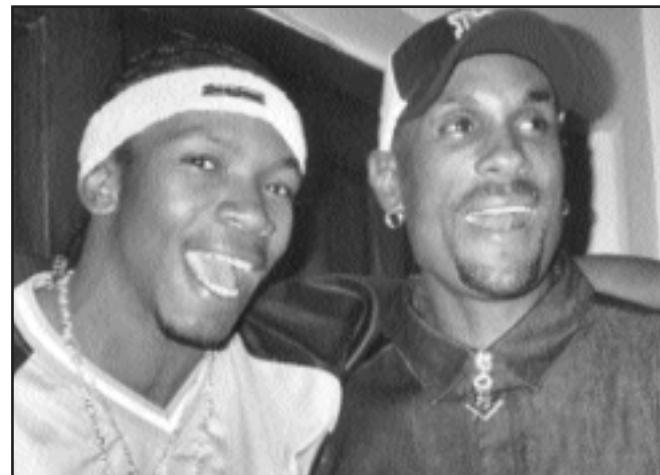
In the whole setup, the children get the worst deal. I talk to the young people a lot. I often just listen to them rap.

One young man wants to be a writer and I have him write poems or letters and show me. This time, I got him to give me an interview on his thoughts on how we live here at Ogden Courts:

He wants to know why is it we only come together to kill one another. Then he went on to say, "We must not let demons nor temptation control our lives or passion to succeed. We must open our eyes and hearts to one another and see the light in each other's souls. We must come together and see each other's goals and tributes, to strive harder in our society, community and youth.

"We must show our youth the right way, and the way to do that is we must stop poisoning our community.

"We have to keep our money in our community. We must build and stop killing each other over silly things, because the brothers we kill might have the cure for cancer, AIDS and any other thing



Up and coming Chicago rapper Donald Word (left), better known as 'Manzet,' poses with an unidentified friend.

Photo by Cenabeth Cross

wrong with our neighborhood and society."

Deon aspires to be a journalist. I had a talk with my editor, and she decided that she would give him an interview and a chance.

On Feb. 2, I had a young rapper bring me a CD of one of his recordings. He is currently working on his first album.

He goes by the single stage name Manzet but his full name is Donald Word. He started his career at the age of 11. He was influenced by his cousin, Kevin Bland. Since that age, he has been in four groups. None of these worked out so he began his solo act.

He has done a musical commercial for a restaurant called "Mr. Munchies." This played for a week on WGCI radio. His idols are Method Man, Busta Rhymes and Mr. Morbid. He writes all his own material and says that he is a "new age musician."

**T**he couple who lived in apartment 509 called the Board of Health because they had maggots coming out of the floor.

I first caught him at Mr. G's on Oct. 11. He entered the freestyle competition. He was on the bill with Xplicit Behavior and Naïve.

I listened to his sounds and was a little surprised. His lyrics aren't full of curse words. His background music is more relaxed and more of a little rap and a little singing mixed in. It is the future, because the current rappers are getting stale, in my opinion.

When I asked him what motivates him, he told me he credits his mother, Vernideen Words. He says her patience and inspiration made him the man he is.

## Good Night Irene

**O**n a sad note, Ogden Courts lost a dear friend on Jan. 22. Irene Clay Chandler was put to rest at Corbin Colonial Funeral Home. Irene had lived in Ogden Courts until she became ill with diabetes and went blind. She was at the Alden Wentworth Nursing Center until she passed at Mt. Sinai Hospital. They put her away on Jan. 27, at Restvale Cemetery.

## CONDOLENCES

RJ extends its deep regards to the families of Wentworth Gardens resident LaTorya McGraw and Robert Taylor Homes resident Robert Brown who both tragically died in a stampede at the Epitome's E2 nightclub on Feb. 16, 2003.

# Housing on State, City Agendas

by Michael Ibrahim

All I can say is that it had to happen. Finally, one of our local aldermen came forth to do something positive about affordable housing. It also looks like we are going in a positive direction statewide with the establishment of a body to which activists will finally be able to address directly their concerns about affordable housing.

In the last RJ, I tried to direct your attention towards some of the problems we're up against regarding the zoning code rewrite. What we are expecting now is that the new re-write will appear for a vote before the Chicago City Council this summer, around June 2003.

Pete Skosey from the Metropolitan Planning Council chimed into the process with these words, "What we have to understand is that zoning cannot



**Michael Ibrahim**

inclusionary zoning or set asides, the key issue is whether or not developers have a responsibility to provide affordable housing if the benefits outweigh the costs. And, in a number of states, I think the courts have ruled that they do."

Meanwhile, Ald. Toni Preckwinkle (4)

recently put forth a new affordable housing ordinance before the city council. Preckwinkle's ordinance "is meant to increase the number of affordable housing units available to a cross section of economic levels in the city."

"We want those who are police officers, waiters, salesmen and others who work in the city to be able to rent and own property here," said Al Kindle, Preckwinkle's chief of staff.

However, before the city council votes, the ordinance will go before a committee chaired by Ald. Ray Suarez (31). It is this

**O**ne of the greatest issues that has come up in meetings at which hundreds of people attended this fall throughout the state...is that we are not doing enough to serve the poorest of the poor.

**-Judy Meima, Statewide Housing Action Coalition**

be the solution for everything. Zoning cannot affect the economics of the property. One cannot say, 'OK, I am going to land zone this district for something that will only sell for five dollars.' But what you can do is that you can zone for a variety. You can zone for a range, and I think that is really the strongest tool that zoning has to address affordability."

An alternative view was put forth by Bob Palmer from the Statewide Housing Action Council (SHAC). Referring to Skosey's views, Palmer declared, "That is a very narrow definition of zoning. Whether we call it

committee that will first study Preckwinkle's ordinance to determine if it may be then voted on by the city council.

Towards the end of January, I learned that Mayor Richard M. Daley recently introduced an ordinance that authorizes \$2 million in HOME funds to expand the coffers of the Chicago Low-Income Housing Trust Fund for use in the Affordable Rents for Chicago (ARC) program. This figure is up from \$1.5 million, according to Department of Housing spokesperson Janina Castillo.

The fund is meant to provide support for the disabled, elderly,

the homeless and other low-income families whose income meet the criterion of being at or below 30 percent of the median income. The median income for the area is approximately \$60,000 a year for a family of four.

There are other developments at the state level. After a yearlong process of various meetings with lawmakers and activists, the state House of Representatives voted to establish a committee to deal directly with housing issues statewide. This means that housing activists will now have a specific body at the level of the state legislature to whom they may direct their concerns.

Judy Meima, executive director of the Statewide Housing Action Coalition, told me there were four meetings held statewide, where state representatives listened to testimony and discussed their relevant research.

Meima had this to say about the success of those meetings: "This committee comes out of the recognition that not enough is being done for housing statewide. After they (state representatives) took a comprehensive look at housing gaps in Illinois, they determined there was a crisis in Illinois."

The committee is still in formulation but state Rep. Julie Hamos (D-Chicago) is the chairperson.

"One of the greatest issues that has come up in meetings at which hundreds of people attended this fall throughout the state," Meima said, "is that we are not doing enough to serve the poorest of the poor."

Meima said that governmental programs slated to address the needs of the poor in our society have not gone far enough to deal with that level of poverty in society. The level of poverty activists are primarily concerned about at this point are those residents statewide whose incomes are below 30 percent of the median income.



**Civil Rights Attorney Lawrence E. Kennon (second from left) with Ida B. Wells rappers, St. Nick, Castor Troy, and Wicket, members of the group the "Looney Bins," after the Justice Coalition Fundraiser event at Grace Place in December 2002.**

**Photo by Beauty Turner**

## Corrections

**Our sincere apologies to Hilliard Homes LAC President Maner Jean Wiley and her family. Her husband was listed as being deceased in the condolence box that appeared on page 19 of the Nov./Dec. 2002 issue of RJ, instead of being in critical condition from an illness at a nearby hospital during that time.**

**In the article that appeared on page 7 of the Nov./Dec. 2002 issue of RJ, Rev. Learna Solsberry was listed as being the LAC vice president of Stateway Gardens. She was the vice president of a building that was demolished in 2002 at housing complex.**

**Pat Dowell  
Quarter Page  
AD**

# Anclanos: Frío, Ruido y Polvo

por Lorenzia  
Shelby

**A**mediados de abril de 2002 se iniciaron las obras en algunos edificios de la Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) para personas de la tercera edad. Ésta era la última parte del plan para remodelar todos estos edificios.

En mi edificio en Las Americas Racine Apartments, en la comunidad Pilsen, situado en 1611 S. Racine Ave, ellos comenzaron a trabajar en la parte exterior del edificio. Primero trabajaron en el techo. Quitaron la vieja capa de alquitrán y limpiaron los desechos e hicieron una restauración completa.

Luego comenzaron a trabajar en los lados del edificio. Comenzaron desde arriba puliendo y raspando la vieja capa de concreto entre los ladrillos hasta que los cuatro lados del edificio estuvieron en buen estado.

Lavarón los lados del edificio con agua, como preparación para ponerles una capa de cal y enmasillarlos.

El día de trabajo comenzaba a las 7 de la mañana y terminaba a las 4 de la tarde, unos minutos más o unos minutos menos. Muchos residentes se quejaron acerca del polvo y el ruido, los gritos, los sonidos ensordecedores provenientes de los trabajos de maquinado y raspado sobre los ladrillos.

Willie McClain, quien ha vivido largos años en los apartamentos Racine, afirmó: "levantaron mucho polvo e hicieron mucho ruido y con todo y eso los resultados del trabajo fueron muy pobres."

Casi todo los inquilinos se estaban que-

jando por el polvo; por la forma como el polvo entraba en sus apartamentos a través de las aberturas y las grietas de las ventanas. El agua que rociaban sobre los lados del edificio penetraba por las ventanas con facilidad. Muchos residentes echaban la culpa de esto al mal estado de las ventanas que no impedían la entrada del polvo y del agua en sus apartamentos.

Un inquilino se lamentaba: "El polvo empeoró mi asma y afectó mi respiración."

Se montaron cuatro andamios en los cuatro lados del edificio. El polvo llenaba todo el aire alrededor del edificio y también en las residencias vecinas.

Kermit Mosley, otra persona con muchos años de residencia en este edificio recuerda con pesar: "todos esos trabajos de máquinas, golpes y polvo por todo el aire fueron demasiada tortura para los ancianos."

En los últimos días de agosto, los trabajos con las máquinas, los golpes y las capas de cal se detuvieron finalmente. El trabajo en la parte exterior había terminado, pero los trabajos en el interior todavía estaban en marcha. Ahora el zumbido de las máquinas, los golpes y los fuertes ruidos estaban dentro del edificio.

Pusieron nuevos retretes, lavamanos, duchas y ventanas. G.F. Construction no quería la presencia de ninguna de las personas que vivían en los pisos que estaba remodelando, por esa razón los inquilinos de los pisos en obras tuvieron que mudarse. Los Apartamentos Racine tienen 9 pisos.

La remodelación comenzó en el noveno piso, pero primero hubo que

reubicar a los inquilinos de ese piso. Los planes consistían en remodelar los apartamentos vacíos en el edificio y mudar a los inquilinos del noveno piso y del nivel seis a esos apartamentos. El nivel seis está constituido por los apartamentos desde el 106 al 906 que estarían reservados para los inquilinos con las discapacidades más graves, según anunciaron los administradores.

Los trabajos en el interior del edificio fueron tan ruidosos como los del exterior. Los golpes y el ruido de los taladros nos despertaban por las mañanas y continuaban todo el día. En cualquier día de la semana, los inquilinos recibían una aviso que decía algo así: "Disculpen las molestias, pero mañana cortaremos el agua desde las 7 de la mañana hasta las 4 de la tarde."

Los inquilinos tenían que llenar sus ollas y cacerolas con agua para tener con qué lavar y cocinar. Esto ocurría entre una y cinco veces por semana.

La remodelación interior continuó los meses de otoño e invierno. Los obreros instalaron puertas improvisadas en la pared este del edificio, pero esas puertas no estaban impermeabilizadas, por lo que el aire frío penetraba por arriba y por debajo de la puerta, enfriando los pasillos.

Los equipos de aire acondicionado que instalaron en las ventanas dejaban mucho que desear. El aire frío penetraba a través de las vías de escape del aire y por debajo del equipo de aire acondicionado, donde los obreros dejaron una abertura de un centímetro. El aire frío penetraba en los apartamentos desde afuera.

Había otra molestia. Los Apartamentos Racine tenían dos ascensores, pero uno de ellos fue eliminado en septiembre de 2002, con la intención de instalar un ascensor nuevo, obligando así a 175 personas a usar un solo ascensor. El otro ascensor te llevaba al quinto piso y entonces, si se oprimía el botón 1, te llevaba al segundo piso, se detenía allí y regresaba subiendo al séptimo piso.

Jerelean Hall, una persona que ha vivido muchos años en este edificio advirtió: instalar un nuevo ascensor debió haber sido lo primero que debieron hacer. Tenemos muchos ancianos y gente enferma que vive aquí y necesita atención especial. En una emergencia, "necesitamos ambos ascensores de tal forma que los paramédicos tengan acceso inmediato a los inquilinos."

En el mes de diciembre de 2002, G.F. Construction recibió la orden de suspender inmediatamente las obras en los apartamentos Racine. Le pregunté a Kim Johnson, el portavoz de la CHA, cuál era la causa para detener las obras.

"No teníamos permisos de trabajo en el sitio y la CHA está examinando un montón de documentos que no se tramitaron correctamente", admitió Johnson.

A Herman Doss, un residente de los Apartamentos Racine, le preguntamos qué pensaba acerca del trabajo que realizaba la compañía G.F. Construction. Doss fue tajante, "debieron haber estado mucho mejor preparados para estas obras."

## CHINESE TRANSLATION

**KOREAN TRANSLATION**

**RUSSIAN TRANSLATION**

# Letters to the Editor

## An Open Letter To CHA

**Editor's Note:** The following is a Feb. 18 letter from Central Advisory Council President Mary Wiggins, who is also the president of Washington Park Homes. Ms. Wiggins' staff asked that Residents' Journal publish this letter.

To the Board of Commissioners, the resident Leadership and Residents of the Chicago Housing Authority;

My name is Mary E. Wiggins, Chairperson for the Central Advisory Council. Today, however, I'm coming before you as the Local Advisory

Council (LAC) President for Washington Park Homes.

I am seriously concerned about the demolition of Washington Park's low-rise and mid-rises under the Hope VI initiative.

As I look around, I see my development has shrunk and is still shrinking. I wonder why the Chicago Housing Authority, at this time, is demolishing my low-rises and mid-rise units that are only 36 years of age, built in 1967? And yet, on other sites, the Chicago Housing Authority is retaining housing stock which is 50 years of

age and better.

I, therefore, ask the following questions:

Is it the intention of the Chicago Housing Authority to completely demolish all of Washington Park Homes?

Is it the intention of the Chicago Housing Authority not to revitalize Washington Park Homes?

It is my understanding that the Chicago Housing Authority has applied for demolition dollars only for Washington Park Homes. Is this true?

Is it also the Chicago Housing

Authority's intention to fully utilize former Washington Park Homes sites for Robert Taylor Hope VI replacement housing, exclusively?

I think the Chicago Housing Authority should "Cease and Desist" from destroying both low-rise and mid-rise housing, especially since there is an inadequate amount of affordable housing and large bedroom units.

- Mary Wiggins

## Crystal Clear Views

Dear Crystal:

I am a 17-year-old girl and I was having a lot of problems with my mother. So I ran away from home. I've been on the streets for about three weeks now.

I used to stay with my older ex-boyfriend but he kicked me out last week. Since then, I've been staying with different friends.

I realize now there is no place like home and I want to go back. The problem is, I don't think my mom wants me back. I've seen her about four times since I left and she acts as if she doesn't care.

For example, when I was staying with my ex, she stopped by once, gave me a couple of dollars, wished me luck, and told him to take care of me.

What can I do to build back the bridge I have burned?

- Regretful Runaway

Dear Runaway:

I really hope that you haven't burned any bridges because it is hard out there and a lot of young people don't realize it until it is too late.

What you have to understand is that your mother is only human. You are her child. She wants the best for you and I'm positive she loves you very much.

She could be acting this way because she wants you to learn from your mistake and come home on your own accord. She probably wants you to come home as much as you want to go home.

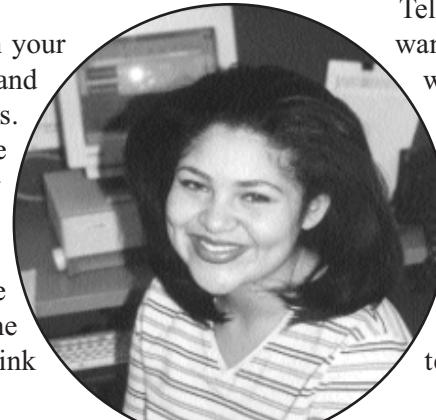
In Spanish, there is a phrase that says, "Me lavo los manos!" This means, I'm washing my hands. I'm bringing this up because your mom might be "washing her hands" of this

situation.

Maybe you have given your mother a lot of problems and heartache over the years. Maybe she feels you have negatively influenced your siblings. She might just feel that when you left, she was going to let you leave the nest and this was the time for her baby bird to sink or fly.

You'll never know what your mother is thinking unless you talk to her.

Tell her how you feel about everything that has happened, why you ran away, how you felt when you were on the streets, why you want to come home, and what you hope to do to remedy the situation.



Crystal Medina

Tell her what you want of her and ask what she wants of you.

If you do go back home, there are always going to be rules. No matter where you live, if you are not the lease holder, there will be

rules. So if you don't want to find yourself on the streets again, no matter what, respect your mother and her home. If you don't go back home, there is plenty of help out there. You just have to look for it.

## Wisdom Beyond Our Years

by Dr. Bill Miller  
Haymarket  
Center

It has been wisely said, Maturity doesn't come with age. It comes with acceptance of responsibility.

This is a truth that makes all the difference to the chances of success for our clients at Haymarket Center.

Some of the key features of any addiction include the need to control

all things and people to assure feeling good. Another is the strong tendency to blame anyone and everyone for the problems and difficulties in life. The individual who has these thoughts and believes that this is the only way to handle life wants all the power but none of the responsibility for his/her life. Regardless of his/her action, such an individual is sure it's not his fault for whatever happens. He sees himself as the ultimate victim.

There are occasions that those of

us who are not candidates for an addiction treatment program feel the same way. Addicts do not have a lock on his thought process and belief system. We too can fall into this trap if we are unwilling to own our decisions and actions.

This is not as easy as it would sound. We live in a world that is usually looking for fault and blame for anything that doesn't go the way it is expected to. It doesn't matter if the expectations are realistic or not. The

result, then, is that we are made to look and feel foolish if we refuse to blame others and instead take appropriate responsibility.

This explains the childish behavior that we frequently see all around us, of course! Maturity doesn't come with age. It comes with acceptance of responsibility.

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

**Patricia Johnson-Gordon**

Greetings, salutations and peace. Peace be unto you and us all as the threat of war looms on the horizon becoming more apparent with each sunrise and sunset.

The "One World" concept has come full circle from economics, where it started, to warfare, where it may likely end.

Historically, there has never been an action by a single government that has the possibility of encompassing every people and culture on earth. But man has never had the capability of destruction that he has today.

Pray for peace as you go about your daily routine, despite the threat of war. In the month of February, part of our daily routine is the celebration of Black History Month.

Sadly, our history has not increased, grown or changed since the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and neither have we as a people. Certainly, there have been some major accomplishments by a few Black individuals but none collectively.

We have been singing the same song, "We Shall Overcome" for the past four decades and have yet to "overcome." And for the past four decades, as I have observed my Black neighbors and co-workers, my Black friends and strangers, Black adults and children, there is a resounding question, growing ever louder, which I would like to give thought to in this edition of Dear Resident.

The question is "Why do we treat each other so bad?" It is the question I ask myself whenever I see Black people in a position to help one another refuse. It is the question I ask myself whenever I hear one Black woman say she cannot stand another based on no more than a first glance with little or no personal contact. It is the question I especially ask myself when we come together as a community to bury one killed by another.

It is the question that even people of other races ask, "Why do you treat each other so bad?" And most often, during the course of conversation, the question becomes, "What's wrong with us?"

I would like to share with you a speech I found during my search for an answer to that question. The following has been credited to William Lynch, who reportedly made the speech on the banks of the James River in 1712. It was quoted by Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan at the Million Man March.

Lynch was a British slave owner in the West Indies who came to the United States to tell American slave owners how to keep their slaves under control. The term "lynching" is derived from his name.

In the words of William Lynch in 1712, there are many ways you can keep control over all "Black People."

"Gentlemen, I greet you on the



**Patricia Johnson-Gordon**

bank of the James River in the year of our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and twelve. First, I shall thank you, the gentlemen of the Colony of Virginia, for bringing me here. I am here to help you solve some of your problems with slaves.

"Your invitation reached me on my modest plantation in the West Indies, where I have experimented with some of the newest and still the oldest methods for control of slaves. Ancient Rome would envy us if my program is implemented.

"I caught the whiff of a dead slave hanging from a tree a couple of miles back. You are not only losing valuable stock (slaves) by hangings, you are having uprising, slaves are running away, your crops are sometimes left in the fields too long for maximum profit, you suffer occasional fires, your animals are killed. Gentlemen, you know what your problems are; I do not need to elaborate.

"I am not here to enumerate your problems. I am here to introduce you to a method of solving them. In my bag here, I have a fool-proof method for controlling your Black slaves. I guarantee every one of you that if installed correctly, it will control the slaves for at least 300 years.

"My method is simple. Any member of your family or any overseer can use it. I have outlined a number of differences among the slaves, and I take these differences and make them bigger. I use fear, distrust and envy for control purposes.

"These methods have worked on my modest plantation in the West Indies, and it will work throughout the South.

"Take this simple little list of differences and think about them. On top of my list is 'age' but it is there only because it starts with 'a.' The second is 'color' or shade. There is intelligence, size, sex, size of plantation, status on plantation, attitude of owners, whether the slaves live in the valley, on a hill, east, west, north, south, have fine hair or coarse hair, or are tall or short.

"Now that you have a list of differences, I shall give you an outline of action - but before I shall assure you that distrust is stronger than trust, and envy is stronger than adulation, respect or admiration.

"The Black Slave, after receiving this indoctrination, shall carry on and will become self-refueling and self-generating for hundreds of years, maybe thousands.

"Don't forget, you must pitch the old Black male vs. the young Black male, and the young Black male against the old Black male. You must use the dark-skin slaves vs. the light-skin slaves, and the light skin slaves vs. the dark skin slaves. You must use the female vs. the male and male vs. the female.

"You must also have all your white servants and overseers distrust all Blacks but it is necessary that your slaves trust and depend on us. They must love, respect and trust only us.

"Understanding is the best thing. Therefore, we shall go deeper into this area of the subject matter concerning what we produced here in this breaking process of the female n---. We have reversed the relationships. In her natural, uncivilized state, she would have a strong dependency on the uncivilized n--- male, and she would have a limited protective tendency toward her independent male offspring and would raise the female offspring to be dependent like her.

"Nature had provided for this type of balance. We reversed nature by burning and pulling one uncivilized n--- apart and bull whipping the other to the point of death - all in her presence. By her being left alone, unprotected, with the male image destroyed, the ordeal caused her to move from her psychological dependent state to a frozen independent state.

"In the frozen, psychological state of independence, she will raise her male and female offspring in reverse roles. For fear of the young male's life, she will psychologically train him to be mentally weak and dependent but physically strong.

"Continually, through the breaking of uncivilized savage n---, by throwing the n--- female savage into a frozen psychological state of independency, by killing of the protective male image, by creating a submissive dependent mind of the n---

male savage, we have created an orbiting cycle that turns on its own axis forever, unless a phenomenon occurs and re-shifts the position of the male and female savages.

"Our experts warned us about the possibility of this phenomenon occurring, for they say that the mind has a strong drive to correct and re-correct itself over a period of time if it can touch some substantial original historical base; and they advised us that the best way to deal with this phenomenon is to shave off the brute's mental history and create a multiplicity of phenomena of illusions, so that each illusion will twirl on its own orbit, something similar to floating balls in a vacuum.

"This creation of multiplicity of phenomena of illusions entails the principles of cross-breeding the n---.

"Cross-breeding completed, for further separation from their original beginning, we must completely destroy the mother tongue of the n--- and institute a new language that involves the new life's work.

"You know, language is a particular institution. It leads to the heart of a people. The more a foreigner (slave) knows about the language of another country, the more he is able to move through all levels of that society. For example, you take a slave, if you teach him all about your language, he will know all your secrets, and he is then no more slave, for you can't fool him any longer, and being a fool is one of the basic ingredients of and incidents to the maintenance of the slavery system...."

This is not the speech in its entirety. I found some it just too offensive to reproduce. Especially the cross-breeding of Black people with white blood as compared to that of horses and asses resulting in "a multiplicity of colors of ass backward, unusual n---s, running tied to backward ass long-head mules, the one productive of itself, the other sterile."

My God! Could the answer to the question be this horribly simple? Is the cycle still turning on its own axis? Do we still think and act like slaves? Are we incapable of re-correcting ourselves?

Certainly, our culture, our African history, with roots as deep as Africa's tallest tree, were destroyed by Lynch's axis of evil. There is little culturally African about us today. The history that we celebrate is given us by who we have become, not who we were.

But there is a history common to all men that has the ability to re-correct us. A history that turns on an axis of love. My God! Could the solution to the question be this simple?

It would appear that the only thing left for us to overcome is ourselves.

We shall...

-Pat



This image depicts a mural which was painted on the walls of a building owned by the Tranquility Marksman Association, founded by the late Marion Stamps, a tireless crusader for the rights of Cabrini-Green tenants. The building stood at Clybourn Avenue and Division Street until it was demolished several years ago.

Photo by Patricia Johnson-Gordon

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Left photo depicts Hayes Center CEO and President Zenobia Johnson-Black (center, in blue) with South African educators (from left), Hayes Center Board member Ron Robinson (To Ms. Black's right), Hayes Center Technology Specialist Lynell Dylon, and Monica Faith-Stewart, a former Illinois state representative and current trade delegate to South Africa, during the South Africans' recent visit to Chicago in Jan. In photo to the right, Chicago Public Schools official James Deans speaks to young people gathered for Youth Day at the Hayes Center on Feb. 13 during Black Family Technology Week.



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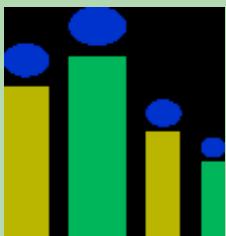
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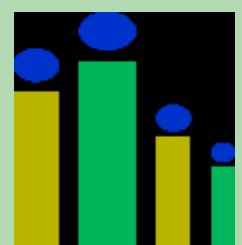
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