



THE PEOPLE'S HOUSE

Reflections from Public Housing Residents and Partners

A PUBLICATION OF THE MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

VOL. 3, No.1 Winter 2004

A Heartwarming Thanks to All of our Friends that Visited "Our House"

Dear Resident Leader:

The time has come again for us here at the MSU Community and Economic Development Program (CEDP) to express our gratitude and appreciation for being allowed to serve and facilitate public housing residents through the ROSS I & ROSS II Public Housing Capacity Building 2002-2003 training sessions. Throughout the past eight months, we have seen residents become more active and involved in shaping the present and future livelihood of their neighborhoods and communities. The stakes are high as public housing has come under attack by various factions. But you, our friends and supporters, have made sure that public housing residents have a voice and that the fight continues toward improving not only public housing communities, but also the lives and futures of those living in these neighborhoods. In honor of those who recognize the stake that we all share in realizing healthy and productive communities, the third volume of the *People's House* is dedicated to you, our vigilant and steadfast supporters.

This past year we witnessed outstanding strides by residents and saw a rejuvenated spirit emerge. Several residents ran for political offices in their respective communities while others had to face tremendous, adverse situations. Despite your circumstances and the difficult challenges that you faced, you remained positive, confided in us, and endorsed the work that we were doing here. For that, we say **thank you**. Thank you for having faith in us to do our job and thank you for demonstrating such a resilient and positive spirit. We admire your courage and the determination that you have shown in helping to create, build and shape a successful Public Housing Institute.

Additionally, at this year's graduation ceremony we saw the induction of 10 new Fellows (8 Public Housing Institute Fellows and 2 MSU Fellows). This brings the total to 33! We applaud their efforts and their work beyond the Public Housing Institute to strengthen resident empowerment. Also, we welcomed well over 100 residents to the ceremony! Not only did the musical talents of several residents grace us, but we were also privileged to hear words of encouragement and support from Stephanie Avery, Acting Director for Supportive Service & Grant Program Division, from HUD in Washington D.C., and Tony Benavides, the Mayor of Lansing.

This was definitely an exciting year and we cannot express enough how much we appreciate your visit to our House. With your help and support we were able to obtain a 6 month extension for ROSS I and will be concluding the last round of ROSS II for the 2003-2004 session. These are very busy and exciting times and there is no doubt that your efforts and commitment to empowering yourself, fellow residents, and your community are vital and essential to sustaining that sense of cohesion and success that defines a community. You are a testament and an example of what community is all about. Again, thank you for everything and let's get ready to rock 'n' roll for next year!

Sincerely,

The MSU/CEDP Public Housing Team

Reflections from the

Patty Campbell



*Patty Campbell
River Rouge Public
Housing*

The Fellows Program that is offered by Michigan State University with the different public housing communities in the ROSS grant has offered me an opportunity to receive first hand information from many experts who deal directly with a wide variety of housing issues. As a result of this training, I have become more equipped to deal with resident concerns, which is an important part of my job as a Housing Commissioner in the City of River Rouge. The program also gave me a chance to meet with other residents throughout Michigan, from Bay City to Inkster. Additionally, the program was very helpful providing me with resources that I could use in the future. For example, through the training, not only was I

exposed to meetings with Representative Murphy and others from the State Government, but I also benefited from the leadership training offered by Dushaw Hockett and Othello Poulard, as well as from the new awareness of the creative projects that other Resident Organizations across the state have undertaken in their communities. Since taking this training I feel more capable of making informed decisions that affect residents in my area and I am more knowledgeable regarding federal and local laws that affect Housing residents. I would recommend that all Public Housing Authorities in the state of Michigan consider becoming a part of the Michigan State University family and assist their residents in taking part in the trainings that they offer.

“For a better informed and trained resident is truly a better resident and a more productive member of the toal community.”

Down Home Potato Salad

Submitted by Pearlne Diggs

Prep time: 30 min.

Total Time: 2 hrs. 30 min.

Ingredients:

- 2lb. Red potatoes, cooked and diced
 - 3cups diced cooked ham (about 1lb.)
 - 1pt. Cherry tomatoes, quartered
 - 3 green onions, chopped
 - 1 1/3 cup Grey Paupon Dijon Mustard
 - 1 1/3 cup Kraft Mayo Real Mayo or Miracle Whip
 - 2 tbsp. White Vinegar
1. Mix patatoes, ham, tomatoes and green onions in large bowl; set aside., 2. Mix mustard, mayo and vinegar in small bowl. Stir into potato mixture, tossing to coat well. Cover., refrigerate at least 2 hours to blend flavors.

Fresh Broccoli Salad

Submitted by Cleoma Adams

- 2 bunches fresh broccoli
 - 1 package bacon, cooked & drained
 - 2/3 cup raisins
 - 1/3 cup walnuts
 - 1 cup mayonnaise
 - 1/2 cup sugar
 - 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
 - 1/2 onion, chopped
- Mix broccoli, bacon, raisins, onions and nuts together. Mix mayonnaise, sugar and vinegar in separate bowl. Pour over broccoli and mix well. Refrigerate at least two hours before serving.

Public Housing Fellows

Jimmie Caldwell



*Jimmie Caldwell,
Benton Harbor
Public Housing*

I am a Resident Commissioner for the Benton Harbor Housing Commission. I serve as Treasurer on the Resident Council Board. I am writing this letter to share my thoughts about the rioting that occurred in Benton Harbor in June, which had a major impact on our community.

When I first heard that rioting was happening in our community, I didn't believe that it was true. Hundreds of people in Benton Harbor were burning houses, throwing bricks at cars, fighting, stealing and so on. At first, I was nervous and upset because the rioting was happening only seven or eight blocks from my house. I prayed that it would stop or that it at least didn't get any closer. But even though all of the rioting was frightening, I also knew that most of the things that people were speaking out about were true. For years, we have been mistreated, disrespected, unfairly arrested, fined and jailed, and have had very little access to jobs and safe living environments. On the other hand, I also know that it was wrong for people to be burning homes and destroying our city. But our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ heard his people cry and I had faith that he was going to answer our prayers that the rioting would stop.

Since the rioting ended, some improvements have been made in the community. For example, some area youth got temporary employment for six weeks and some other initiatives have occurred in the community. But even though these improvements have been made, I am still doubtful about the future. I wonder what will happen at the end of the six weeks. The long history of racism in this community cannot be "fixed" with temporary solutions and I am certain that the court system will continue to treat African Americans different from Caucasians. And so far, it seems that police harassment has gotten worse since the end of the riot. In my view, the question of where we go from here and what Benton Harbor residents should do to improve their situation is still largely unanswered.

Sincerely Yours,
Jimmie Caldwell
Benton Harbor Public Housing Resident Commissioner

How Do You Make Connections in Your Neighborhood?

by

Dr. John Schweitzer

MSU Community and Economic Development Program



*Dr. John Schweitzer,
Community Economic
Development Program*

Making connections with your neighbors is an important part of keeping your neighborhood safe and livable. If something is not working well where you live, your neighbors can help you solve the problem, *together*. Whether you live in a public housing project, a single family home, a condominium or an apartment, your neighbors are a

part of the fabric of your life. They are real people who eat, sleep, play with their children and mow the lawns on your block. As a group, you and your neighbors form a community. Together, you share neighborhood assets like parks, churches, grocery stores or laundromats. You also share concerns such as neighborhood safety or a poorly maintained lot. Because you live there, you are a part of the community. Whether or not you connect with the people around you is a choice that you make.

Why is being a good neighbor important? Residents living in areas where they share a sense of community with their neighbors are more likely to feel safe and secure and have a lower fear of crime. They feel healthier and happier about their lives. People living in connected neighborhoods are more likely to vote and recycle and to help others by volunteering and donating blood. For these reasons and many more, being a good neighbor and connecting with others on your block not only makes the neighborhood better, but also helps you personally. And don't forget, neighborliness is not a special talent. *It is a decision!* Anyone can be a good neighbor, it just takes a little initiative, and the rewards make it worth while. Neighborhoods with a higher sense of community enjoy a higher quality of life. So do it for yourself and your family.

Finding the courage to make new connections is not easy for everyone. But you and your neighbors will discover that it becomes easier after the first step. Once you have made yourself familiar to your neighbors, "breaking the ice" will be simple. Just get involved with your neighbors and your neighborhood and see how quickly others join. Everyone wants a better neighborhood. And it's easy. Just take it one step at a time.

Below are some fun ways for you to start successful neighboring!

- Find an excuse to walk around the block with your pet or children in order to make yourself visible.
- Say hello to everyone you meet on your block.
- Give your neighbors a compliment: "Your lawn/garden looks nice".
- Take your backyard project to the front yard. Work on your bike or lawnmower on your porch or sidewalk. That way you can say "hi" to neighbors.
- If you've lived on your block for some time, take the first step towards newcomers. Take new neighbors a plant or small gift, bake them some cookies or help them unload their car and welcome them to the neighborhood.
- Put up a neighborhood bulletin board, or an electronic one on the Internet.
- Organize a welcome wagon for new neighbors.
- Have a neighborhood yard sale. Your neighbors are sure to come and you might even sell a few things.
- Organize a block party.
- Research the history of the neighborhood.
- Create a neighborhood map and share it with the rest of your block.
- Do face painting for the kids.
- Help a neighbor prepare for severe weather, or a blackout.
- Get a few neighbors together to plant flowers in a median or clean up a park.
- During hot or cold spells, check in on community elders to make sure they are safe and comfortable. Sadly, a few elderly people die every year during heat or cold waves because no one bothered to check up on them.
- Help neighborhood children create a lemonade stand.
- Ask a neighbor to get together to discuss a clean-up project on your block. Ask them to bring another neighbor. Now you have a team!
- Empty lots attract crime and pests. Get a team to clean up litter and mow weeds.
- Rake the extra leaves in untended areas and remove stray litter.

*Fellows Receiving Awards at
 "2003" Graduation and Celebration
 from
 Dr. Rex LaMore, State Director,
 Community and Economic Development Program*



*Sharonda Addison
 Albion Housing*



*Brenda Gunn
 Detroit Housing*



*Tabitha Kelly
 Benton Harbor Housing*



*Samuel Stephen,
 Muskegon Heights Housing*



*Karl Ophiem
 receiving award for
 Jackie Allen Bay City*



*Michael Scott
 Albion Housing*



*William Bundy
 Muskegon Housing*



*Lionel Rayford
 Ecorse Housing
 Executive Director,
 Thank you for your
 support*



*Tony Bicy
 Keyboard, Samuel
 Cross, Saxophone*

Dress for Success in Lansing

by

Patricia Patrick & Bernard Gwekwerere



*Patricia Patrick,
Lansing Public
Housing*

Lansing Public Housing residents recently came together in an event that they called *Dress for Success*. This was a talent/fashion show that was put together to provide entertainment for the residents as well as build character and confidence. According to Pat Patrick, who led

the organization of the event, "This event was meant to send a message to the public that people in public housing have goals, ideas and can work to achieve them."

This event took a lot of preparation to get it together. According to Pat Patrick the event was largely organized and directed by La Roy Froh Resident Council and the computer center at LaRoy Froh. Staff at the computer center planned the dates for the event, and then recruited participants for the event. When participants were recruited, the next step was to prepare and create dance steps and rehearse with the youthful participants. She said the largely youthful presenters learn to work together, control their emotions and work together respectfully in their groups. In the beginning the young participants were not confident about performing before an audience. However, with a lot of practice and encouragement the participants gained mastery of their talents and were eager to perform. Practicing for the event started May 17, 2003 and the event was held on July 26, 2003.

Donations

A large event like this would not prosper without the accompanying resources. The organizing team identified potential donors to their event. The resources that were required for the event were flowers, clothing, and food.

The organizing team sent request for donations to a long list of possible donors for the event. Responses were obtained from Finger Print Fashions, Catherine's Women Apparel and K Mart. They provided clothes for the participants to model. Each of the participants

modeled 2 to 3 outfits from K-Mart and one each from Finger Print.

The event was held at the South Cedar Police precinct of the Lansing Police Department. It began with information booths where organizations with a keen interest in Lansing public housing shared information. The organizations that took part in the information booth were Lansing School District, Fire Department, Boys Scouts, Police Department and Michigan State University Community and Economic Development Program (CEDP).

The Lansing School District shared information about developments in the school district and the issues that were being voted for. The fire department informed residents about the new smoke detectors for the homes, while the police department set up a booth to provide information about community policing and how to become a police officer. They also provided assistance in hosting the event. Michigan State University CEDP provided information about the various programs that residents could participate in to improve their quality of life.

Talent/fashion show

The participants ranged from 4 to 17 years and they modeled and/or showcased their talents in poetry, dance/music and skits. There was a general theme about togetherness in the talents/fashion show. The participants entertained the large audience who gathered for the event. The purpose of the event was to entertain and build character amongst the participants and Lansing Public housing residents. The event also brought together all the public housing residents in a spirit of unity. This event was different from the other highly competitive events where the various public housing communities in Lansing compete against each other. These competitive events tend to breed animosity amongst the communities making it difficult to do things together and hurting the self-esteem of the losing teams.



*Phuc Nguyen,
Modeling in
Dress for
Success*



Group of Participants in Dress for Success

The event was free for all to enjoy. There were some raffle tickets sold to add to the fun of the event and raise some funds for next year's event. Intermittently the raffle was conducted and winners got fabulous items such as computers, microwave, karaoke machine and more.

The colorful event culminated with food and drinks where people ate and shared views about the events of the day. After the event residents began to talk about next year's event. A lot of excitement was generated for next year's event. This year's event was rather a challenge to prepare, as residents were unsure of the outcome. However, after the resounding success of the event, many residents expressed interest in participating in subsequent events. This was what the event was aimed at achieving, motivating residents to want to do things together.

For Pat Patrick, this was a very rewarding event, after all the work of mobilizing resources and participants for the event, coordinating the whole event and making sure that everything worked as planned. Pat Patrick is a Michigan State University Public Housing Institute Fellow. This is a leadership program administered by the CEDP to develop community leaders in Michigan's public housing. This event thus was a show of the skills and knowledge gained through this program being put to practical use.

Continued from page 5
Fellows Receiving Awards at
"2003" Graduation and Celebration
from
Dr. Rex LaMore, Director, CEDP



Eunice Tyson
Benton Harbor Housing



Maxine Sheheen Bay
City Housing



Ronald Millard
Bay City Housing



Stannetta Rider
Albion Housing

Social Capital: An Endangered Resource

by

Robert Esdale, Master Urban Planning



Robert Esdale, MUP

Have you ever wondered what it would take to rekindle the activism that seemed to be so prevalent in America in the 1960s and 70s? Back then people seemed to be more informed, more opinionated, more willing to rally for a cause. In his work "Bowling Alone - America's Declining Social Capital," Robert Putnam describes social capital as "those social connections and civic engagement, which pervasively influence our public life, as well as our private prospects." Social capital is the resource drawn upon for social action.

By looking at various forms of community involvement, such as voting, organizational membership, church membership and attendance, and community volunteers, Putnam describes an American society that is increasingly becoming more isolated and disengaged, and therefore losing social capital. In his title he points out the ironic fact that "more Americans are bowling today than ever before, but bowling in organized leagues has plummeted in the last decade or so. Between 1980 and 1993 the total number of bowlers in America increased by 10 percent, while league bowling decreased by 40 percent." Putnam goes on to explain that the problem with this trend is threatening not only to the small business owner of the bowling alley "because those who bowl as members of leagues consume three times as much beer and pizza as solo bowlers, and the money in bowling is in the beer and pizza, not the balls and shoes." but also the broader society. The broader social implications are found in the lack of social interaction and occasional civic conversations over beer and pizza, according to Putnam.

What Putnam suggests has happened is that important social organizations, which created group action and activism, are being replaced by larger organizations, with large national memberships (e.g., AARP). While these organizations may be of great social significance, they do not provide the personal contact and relationships, which build trust among their members. Therefore we experience the decline of social connectedness, a valuable resource in society. This book also looks at social groups (religious, self-help, etc.), which meet regularly and provide support or caring for those who participate in them. Putnam explains that these groups "...represent an important form of social capital, and they need to be accounted for in any serious reckoning of trends in social connectedness. On the other hand, they do not typically play the same role as traditional civic associations." The problem comes in analyzing how these groups function, or as Putnam says:

Small groups may not be fostering community as effectively as many of their proponents would like. Some small groups merely provide occasions for individuals to focus on themselves in the presence of others. The social contract binding members together asserts only the weakest of obligations. Come if you have time. Talk if you feel like it. Respect everyone's opinion. Never criticize. Leave quietly if you become dissatisfied.

What importance can we place on these observations? So what, if people choose not to participate in social and civic organizations? The consequences drawn by Putnam are explained as: "The close correlation between social trust and associational membership is true not only across time and across individuals, but also across countries."

Evidence from the 1991 World Values Survey demonstrates the following: Across the 35 countries in this survey, social trust and civic engagement are strongly correlated; the

greater the density of associational membership in a society, the more trusting its citizens. Trust and engagement are two facets of the same underlying factor - social capital.

So what should be done? More research, of course. What self-respecting social scientist wouldn't suggest further study? How about looking at the degree to which group affiliation of any type contributes to social capital. What impact does the Internet, electronic communication, and "virtual meetings" have on these issues? These may, or may not be intriguing questions, but Putnam's concern more directly lies with the potential causes of the erosion of social capital. We need to explore creatively how public policy impinges on (or might impinge on) social-capital formation. In some well-known instances, public policy has destroyed highly effective social networks and norms. American slum-clearance policy of the 1950s and 1960s, for example, renovated physical capital, but at a very high cost to existing social capital. The consolidation of country post offices and small school districts has promised administrative and financial efficiencies, but full-cost accounting for the effects of these policies on social capital might produce a more negative verdict. On the other hand, such past initiatives as the county agricultural-agent system, community colleges, and tax deductions for charitable contributions illustrate that government can encourage social-capital formation. We are assured that society will continue to evolve and change. Shouldn't we therefore be committed to preservation and building social capital wherever possible?

Robert Esdale, MUP (MSU '87) works as a consultant and free lance writer in Okemos, Michigan. He has worked with individuals and organizations over the past two decades in planning and community development projects.

Help Fight Auto Theft

In the mid-1980's Michigan was one of the top ten states with the highest rate of auto theft. Of course and increase in auto thefts means an increase in insurance rates. For many people the car of their dreams is not possible because of increasing insurance rates. The Anti Car Theft Campaign recognized this and created a program designed to bring law enforcement, communities and businesses together to fight auto theft. This culmination of expertise has been a reality since 1986 and is known as the Michigan Automobile Theft Prevention Authority (ATPA). Neighborhood Service Organization (NSO) is one of the organizations that works with ATPA to fight auto theft with their free VIN Etching Program.

Every vehicle has a Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), which is located on the dashboard above the steering wheel. For those who want to participate in the program, their VIN is typed on small stencils and etched on the bottom corner of all the windows. VIN Etching is a permanent way to identify a vehicle. Small warning stickers are placed inside the windows near locks. These stickers help identify etched vehicle more quickly. Car thieves generally look for vehicles without identifiable marks so they can sell the parts. Statistics have shown that etched vehicles that are less likely to be stolen. For more than 10 years, NSO and ATPA have etched the windows of thousands of vehicles, which has helped reduce the rate of auto theft in Michigan. For more information on the VIN Etching Program or to make an appointment to have your vehicle etched, please call Gaylyne Brown, Auto Theft Prevention Coordinator at (313) 537-5268.

Another program designed to fight auto thefts is the Help Eliminate Auto Thefts (HEAT) Program. HEAT rewards citizens for confidential tips leading to the arrest and prosecution of suspected car thieves and chop shop operators. Help Eliminate Auto Thefts 1-800-242-HEAT.

A Fellow Dares to Dream the Possible Dream!

by

Kristin Huber, Bernard Gwekwerere & Celeste Starks



*Bobbie Wallace,
Inkster Fellow*

How often do you dare to dream? Once a year? Once a month? Or maybe everyday? Are they fleeting dreams or immense dreams? Do those dreams ever come true?

Bobbie Wallace, a Michigan State University Public Housing Fellow, is daring to dream big everyday. Will her dream come true?

She doesn't know yet, but she hopes to find out within the next month. Do you want to dream with her? We hope so!

Ms. Wallace heard about the Michigan State University Community and Economic Development Program (CEDP) Public Housing program through a friend and then sought the program out to find out what it was about. She was "hungry for empowerment" according to Celeste Starks, CEDP Program Specialist. Ms. Wallace was the "lone ranger" from her community of Inkster, Michigan. She made the trip to Lansing and other learning sites for eight months just so she could better herself, learning all the while. She graduated from the program to become a MSU CEDP Public Housing Fellow. Fellows are graduates of the Public Housing training sessions who make a commitment to making a difference in their community. Ms. Wallace is doing just that in Inkster.

Ms. Wallace grew up in Inkster and wants to change this distressed community back into a thriving community again. 2000 Census data show that in Inkster, with a population of about 30,000, 22 percent of families with children under 18 live in poverty. Forty percent are unemployed. Residents have a limited education. Twenty percent have a 9th to 12th grade education, but no diploma. Ms. Wallace is developing an initiative called "Inkster Up" that will help to relieve those problems and improve the quality of living.

What is Ms. Wallace's dream? "Inkster Up" is the dream. The goal is that by participating in "Inkster Up" each participant would become more marketable. The program will have three main areas. The first focus will be on young adults aged 16-24 (Youth Build) through

skill building and construction of affordable housing along with education on many different levels, including GED and higher education. The second focus will be on information technology (IT), including both hardware and software applications. The last focus will be on micro-enterprise development, which will help residents learn how to develop their own businesses. This would ensure that residents of Inkster are showing a vested interest in their own community and creating initiatives to serve that community.

Supporting areas, along with the three main focus areas, will be childcare, healthcare and drug prevention. Ms. Wallace hopes to house the program in the old Inkster Middle School and partner with many different programs and agencies, such as: Wayne Community College, SEMCA, the City of Inkster, Inkster Public Schools, Starfish Family Services, and many more.

This initiative would eventually help to relieve some of the poverty in Inkster as well as give residents more of a reason to stay in their community and be a part of something greater than themselves. Their quality of life would improve and they would know how to get and keep a job. Anyone who lives in this community should be considered a stakeholder. It is their community. They need to take ownership of it. Inkster Up would be a starting point for this ownership.

What is in favor of Bobbie and this project? What does she have to lose?

Ms. Wallace is diligently working to make her dream a reality. There are meetings to set, people to network with, a board of directors to form, organizational skills to learn and many challenges to overcome. She has been very lucky to be able to meet with Inkster Public School's Emergency Financial Manager, Mr. Howard Morris. Ms. Wallace has also met with Mr. Manuel Wilson, the Title I Coordinator/CRD for Inkster Public Schools, Mr. Derek Hull, Director of Planning and Economic Development for the City of Inkster and Mr. Robert Gordon, City Manager for the City of Inkster. Mr. Christopher B. Smith, the Chief Operating Officer of SEMCA, Ms. Susan D. Corey, Manager of Workforce Development, also from SEMCA and Mr. David Beaumont, the

continued from page 10

Assistant Vice Chancellor of Operations of Wayne Community College have also shown a vested interest. These particular people are showing a vested interest in the development of their community and Ms. Wallace's project. Her board of advisors is slowly developing. What does she have to lose? Nothing! Or everything! Either way it's worth the risk.

Mrs. Starks recognizes that with Ms. Wallace's dream comes challenges, organization, meetings, and sometime even last minute changes, but "this MSU CEDP Public Housing Fellow has decided that her community is worth the investment". She has decided that you are worth it! Are you willing to come along and dream with Bobbie Wallace?

Dr. Schweitzer continued from page 4

- ❑ Have a block flower-planting day. Put flowers in porch planters at every house, plant flowers in medians or vacant areas.
- ❑ Plan a community picnic or potluck where every family brings a dish. You could even have a chili cook-off or pie contest.
- ❑ Have games, raffles and music that can be enjoyed by everyone.
- ❑ Start a neighborhood newsletter.
- ❑ Invite a neighbor to your front porch for some iced tea.

All of these suggestions and more can be found in the "Building Neighborhood Connections- an Introduction to Successful Neighboring" handbook by John Schweitzer and his Sense of Community Project Team at the MSU Center for Urban Affairs. 517.353.9144. More on Community Building can also be found on the following webpage: www.msu.edu/user/socomm

Vienna Rolls

Submitted by Cleoma Adams

Use any desired yeast dough. After first rising, pinch off pieces of dough and shape into smooth balls about 2 inches in diameter. Place on board and roll with hands until ball becomes elongated and pointed at the ends. Brush rolls with milk, and sprinkle with caraway or poppy seeds. Place on greased baking sheet sprinkled with corn meal. Cover and let rise until double. Bake like Butterhorn rolls

Look Who Came to Visit Our House & Take Part in the 2003 Graduation and Celebration



*Diane Johnson
Acting Detroit HUD
Field Director*



*Mayor Robert Jones
Kalamazoo*



*Mayor Tony Benavides Lansing
receiving MSU/CEDP Mug*



*Stephanie Avery, Acting Director
for Supporting Service & Grant
Program Division HUD*



*State Representative
Michael Murphy*

2003 2004 Face to Face Learning Sessions

| Date | Site | Topic | Presenter |
|--|---|--|---|
| 10/10/03 11/07/03 | LeRoy Froh Community Center Black Child & Family Institute | HUD Policy & Procedures Increasing Resident Participation | DuShaw Hockett Robert James & Karl Opheim |
| 12/12/03 01/09/04 02/06/04 03/05/04 | Black Child & Family Institute Benton Harbor Detroit Lansing | Fundamentals of Shared Leadership Planning Economic Development Planning for Children, Youth & Seniors | Rita Robinson Lionel Rayford Sam Little |
| 04/09/04 05/07/04 | Ecorse/River Rouge Lansing Capital | Health & Wellness Legislative Day | Dr. Gail Christopher Legislators |

Fellows Sessions

| Date | Site | Topic | Presenter |
|--|---|--|---|
| 10/10/03 11/07/03 12/12/03 | LeRoy Froh Community Center Black Family & Child Institute Black Family & Child Institute | Non-profit, 501C Status Non-profit status continued Project design | Lionel Rayford Lionel Rayford Tony Lentych |
| 01/09/04 02/06/04 03/05/04 04/09/04 05/07/04 | Benton Harbor Detroit Lansing Ecorse/River Rouge Lansing Capital | Planning Financial Management Drug Elimination Subcontracting with PHA's Legislative Day | PHA's Ex. Dir. HUD Feild Office Theresa Webster Section 3 Legislators |

Distance Learning Sessions

| Date | Site | Topic | Presenter |
|----------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| 10/24/03 | Your local distance learning site | Community Service Act | Angela Lett Foster |
| 11/21/03 | Your local distance learning site | Community Organizing & Participation | Linda Patrick |
| 12/19/03 | Your local distance learning site | Voting | Maureen Taylor |
| 01/23/04 | Your local distance learning site | Partnership Development | David Knaggs |
| 02/20/04 | Your local distance learning site | Mapping the Future of ROSS in Michigan | Rex LaMore |
| 03/19/04 | Your local distance learning site | Negotiation & Conflict Resolution | Karen Bearegard, Anne Smily, Paula Zera |
| 04/23/04 | Your local distance learning site | Media Coverage & Representation | Maxie Jackson |
| 05/21/04 | Your local distance learning site | Fellows Recognition | |

Neighborhood Early Warning Systems (NEWS)

by
Julia Ann Darton

Urban & Regional Planning, Dr. Rex LaMore and a student team of the Urban Policy Analysis class engaged this semester to studying "The Neighborhood Early Warning Systems."

Neighborhood Early Warning Systems proposed for Michigan's Cities

The Michigan Land Use Leadership Council Report recommended determining the applicability of Neighborhood Early Warning Systems (NEWS) as a means of combating blight in Michigan's urban areas. It also recommended the funding of demonstration projects. Through their class (Urban Policy Analysis taught by Dr. Rex LaMore) four students researched Neighborhood Early Warning Systems in other parts of the country. The students created a set of recommendations for Michigan outlining important issues to consider in establishing NEWS in Michigan cities.

What is a Neighborhood Early Warning System? NEWS are websites through which users can access a database of public information to track disinvestment in their neighborhoods or cities. The idea is that before disinvestment is a visible problem. Certain government-collected indicators such as unpaid taxes, wanted liens, and code violations make financial disinvestment apparent. N. E. W. Systems around the country assist concerned citizens in their efforts to address problems by providing necessary information. NEWS is up and running in many cities including Chicago and Los Angeles. In these cities, neighborhood and tenant advocacy groups are using the information to make positive changes in their communities. Each city has developed different websites that offer users some simple information in varying levels of complexity. Some offer users the option of mapping the available data so that users can see what problems are in the vicinity of particular properties or in specific neighborhood.

Michigan cities would benefit from increased information being made available to citizens and community and neighborhood groups. A partnership with a Michigan university could provide the technological resources to get a NEWS program started in one city or multiple cities simultaneously in Michigan. From a demonstration the site could expand to other Michigan cities struggling with disinvestment and blight. You can peruse existing NEWS programs and decide if something like this would be helpful to Michigan at: <http://nkla.sppsr.ucla.edu/> (Los Angeles) and <http://www.newschicago.org/> (Chicago).

For more information, a copy of the students' paper is available at the NAM website: <http://www.msu.edu/user/namich/>

Cream Cheese Pound Cake

Submitted by Cleoma Adams

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Cup margarine, softened | 1/2 cup butter softened |
| 1 8 oz. package cream cheese softened | |
| 3 cups sugar | 6 eggs |
| 3 cups sifted flour | 2 teaspoons vanilla extract |

Combine margarine, butter & cream cheese. Beat on high speed with a mixer. Gradually add sugar; beat until light and fluffy (about 5 minutes). Add eggs, one at a time. Beat well. Stir in vanilla. Pour batter into a greased 10-inch tube pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 1 hour 30 minutes. Remove from pan and cool.

Reflections from the



*Debra Stephens, President
Ecorse Resident Council*

Hello:

My name is Debra Stephens. I am the President for the Ecorse Housing Commission Resident Council Board. During my time as the Resident Council President I have accomplished many things through prayers and God's good grace.

We have a Summer Day Camp Program that runs from June through August where the children are taught Drug Prevention, Alcohol Prevention, "Don't Talk to Strangers," "Your Body Belongs to You," Fire Prevention, Arts & Crafts and educational field trips every other Saturday. We have children that are of age to work in the program, as Youth Aides. The children are fed breakfast, lunch and a nutritious snack everyday. The hours for this program are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

We had a Back to School party in September where all the children received book bags and school supplies to start the school year. In October, we gave out three hundred bags of candy to children on Halloween. We also took one hundred children to the Detroit Pistons opening game on October 30, 2003!

In November, we are giving a Thanksgiving dinner for sixty senior citizens and disabled residents who live in our complex. Few Memorial Church in River Rouge donated five Thanksgiving boxes to residents with large families who needed them. Writing donation letters to different churches, grocery stores, department stores and companies in our community allowed us to provide such a great service.

I am now working on getting coats, hats, gloves and scarves for our children's Christmas event being held in December. Pray for us as we pray for each other; for strength and patience for everyone while we work in our communities.

Sincerely,

Debra Stephens/RC President

Quick Yeast Bread

Submitted by Janie Chappell

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 2 packages granular yeast or | 1/3 cup sugar |
| 2 cakes compressed yeast | 2 eggs, well beaten |
| 1 cup lukewarm water | 1/3 cup melted shortening half butter |
| 1 teaspoon sugar | 6 1/2 to 7 cups sifted all-purpose flour |
| 1 cup milk, scalded | |
| 2 1/2 teaspoons salt | |

Soften yeast in lukewarm water with 1 teaspoon sugar. Scald the milk, stir in salt and sugar, and cool to lukewarm. When cooled, stir in the yeast mixture combined with beaten eggs. Add about 4 cups of the flour and beat until smooth. Stir and knead in enough flour to make a smooth elastic, but not to stiff dough. Place in a lightly greased bowl, turn dough over. Cover, let rise in a cozy place (85 degrees) about 1 hour, until just double. Then turn out onto lightly floured board and shape into rolls or into tree loaves. Place in greased pans, cover, and let rise again in warm place until double, about 45 minutes. Bake rolls 15 to 20 minutes in a moderately hot oven (400 degrees). Bake loaves at 400 degrees, then reduce heat to moderate (350 degrees) and bake 20 minutes longer. Serve rolls hot, but cool loaves before slicing. Makes 2 dozen rolls or three small loaves.

Public Housing Fellows



Maxine Sheehan,
Bay City Housing

Expanding Horizons: Bay City Public Housing Residents Take Advantage of Community Resources

by Maxine Sheehan

After attending the ROSS leadership classes, I wondered how we could get others from the community involved with our public housing community. I live in a senior high rise and am fortunate to not have many of the problems to deal with that others have in their communities.

We decided it would be beneficial for the seniors to have computers to keep in contact with friends and family as well as to glean information on the internet concerning health problems or who to contact for information regarding concerns about our living conditions. We wrote to many school districts in the area as well as to large companies asking if they would be upgrading their computers in the near future and if they would consider donating some computers to us. We were fortunate enough to get 4 computers donated for our use. We are able to use some of the resident participation funds to pay for Internet connections. A request to the public library produced an instructor to teach basic computer classes at no charge to the residents. We now have several residents who are very proficient with the computers.

We have also made arrangements with an auto dealership here to come each spring and fall to do safety checks on the residents' vehicles at no charge or obligation to the residents. The inspections are done in our parking lot and do not require taking the vehicles to the dealership.

Additionally, an invitation has been issued to several members of the community to speak at our meetings. Our guest speakers are requested to speak on subjects of interest to the residents. An orthopedic surgeon will be our guest speaker in Sept. addressing the subject of osteoarthritis and osteoporosis.

All of these initiatives have taught me that it isn't difficult to get people to respond to your requests for assistance. Many would like to be involved with bettering life for people in public housing but just don't know what is needed from them. When asking for help from these people be prepared to hear some no's but I have found that for the most part, they will respond positively. Good Luck!

English Muffins

Submitted by Janie Chappell

1 1/4 cups milk 1/4 cup lukewarm water
3/4 teaspoon salt 4 cups sifted all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons melted shortening
1 cake compressed yeast or 1 package granular yeast

Scald milk with salt, cool to lukewarm. Soak yeast in the water and add to cooled milk. Add half the flour gradually, beating with wooden spoon until flour is thoroughly mixed in. Add the cooled, melted shortening, beat until smooth. Mix in remaining flour to make a smooth, soft dough. Put into clean, greased bowl. Brush top of dough with a little water; cover with waxed paper and let stand in a warm place (about 85 degrees) until dough is light (about 2 hours). Turn out on lightly floured board and knead gently. Roll out 1/2-inch thick. Cut out in 3 to 4 inch rounds. Place on board sprinkled with cornmeal. Cover and let stand in warm place until muffins begin to get light (about 45 minutes). Then bake over low heat on a slightly greased, moderately hot griddle (300 degrees), about 10 minutes on each side. Cool. When ready to serve, split muffins and toast each half on both sides in oven or broiler. Spread with butter and serve piping hot. About 12 4-inch muffins.



*James Gill, NAACP President,
Detective at Lansing Police
Department*

For the past five years, Michigan State University Community and Economic Development Program (CEDP) have been involved with public housing residents from 13 cities across Michigan in a Capacity Building Leadership Training Program. Several of the residents from Benton Harbor are participants in this training. The People's House, a Newsletter dedicated to the residents of public housing had an opportunity to interview Officer James Gill regarding the incident that occurred surrounding the riots this past summer 2003. Officer James Gill was instrumental in providing some insights into those actions that occurred. Below are the responses from that interview.

Interview Questions for Officer Gill

Name- **James Gill**

Employment-Lansing Detective Officer

Volunteer - President of NAACP

How long have you been with the department?

14 Years with Lansing Police and 23 years as Police Officer and 2 years as President of NAACP.

Give us an account of what happened in Benton Harbor the day/night of the riots in August 2003?

A young black man was driving at a high speed outside the city of Benton Harbor - (Benton Harbor Township) Police chased the man inside the city of Benton Harbor causing a fatal crash.

Based on your contact with residents of Benton Harbor and your relationship with the police department is there a clear-cut answer to what took place and/or what escalated the riots?

There is no clear-cut answer.

From your perspective, had you been a resident of Benton Harbor, what would you have done differently?

As a resident I would have contacted the department of civil rights and NAACP to investigate the accident. I would have also utilize the (FIOA) Freedom of Information Act.

When you met with the city officials was there any indication that Benton Harbor's political atmosphere could have been conducive for the residents to feel safe to talk to them prior to the rioting?

Yes. There are three important and powerful social groups in Benton Harbor, which are the preachers, the politicians and the community. The community just wanted the truth. I believe more could have been accomplished if these three very important entities would have been able to collaborate as a team at the very onset of what occurred.

How can this be avoided in the future?

I strongly believe incidents such as what occurred in the city of Benton Harbor could be avoided when those three social groups communicate effectively and work as a team with no hidden agenda, just emphasizing how actions such as those demonstrate the potential to destroy the good citizens and businesses in Benton Harbor.

As an officer of the law, what advice could you give to the community when situations arise again where there may be confrontation with the law?

Whenever the police department confronts you, stop, don't attempt to out-run the law. If you feel the actions of the officers are wrong, protest the next day. You have a right as an American citizen to file a complaint. Always do whatever the officer instructs you to do.

Do you feel the residents of Benton Harbor received a fair deal/ Do you feel the outcome was a positive one?

No. As an officer of the law, I felt it wasn't a proper investigation done. We as police officers don't chase civilians for civil infraction violations.

Do you agree with the programs (jobs to some of the youth, etc) that have now been implemented in Benton Harbor? Will they sustain the community or do you think it's just a Band-Aid?

I think it's just a Band-Aid, Period.

Construction Management High Tech for Public Housing

by
Jose Gomez

The MSU Construction Management Program (CMP) in cooperation with the MSU Community and Economic Development Program (CEDP) is undertaking a pilot project with the Detroit Housing Commission (DHC) involving information technology. The main goal of the project is to test transfer of computer technology to public housing in Michigan. The project will allow DHC to use best-of-breed technology in the area of construction management. This technology is used by private and public developers with the resources needed to afford expensive computer technology and specialized staff. This pilot project is cost effective given the participation of highly qualified faculty and students that will work hand-on-hand with DHC staff.

A 2001 study¹ of housing nonprofit organizations showed low levels of use of information technology in the production of affordable housing. In fact, the Detroit region displayed a lower productivity than Grand Rapids and Flint, but higher than Lansing and Northern Michigan. Part of the problem of productivity is the access to high technology.

The MSU CEDP and the MSU CMP will seek to expand this assistance to small public housing commissions and nonprofit housing organizations in the near future. The partners are Andrew Sidel and Matt Syal of CMP, Jose Gomez and Celeste Starks of the CEDP, and Trent Carroll, Daryl Bradley, and David Bryant of DHC.

(Footnotes)

¹ Organizational Capacity and Housing Production: A Study of Nonprofit Organizations in Michigan. Michigan State University, Center for Urban Affairs, October 2001.

MSU-Public Housing Fellows Reaching High Marks!

by
Jose Gomez

The MSU-PH Fellows are getting organized for the challenges public housing residents face in 2004 and in the near future. During a training meeting that took place on October 10, 2003 at LeRoy Froh-Lansing, the MSU-PH Fellows decided to create a Fellows-run nonprofit organization named Michigan Housing Fellows Cooperative. This decision was backed up by 17 of the 29 active Fellows in attendance during this meeting. Fellows also decided to form a Working Board to start working on an application for the organization's nonprofit status. This provisional Working Board is composed of Patty Campbell-President; Ricky Hill-Vice President; Maxine Sheehan-Secretary; Pat Patrick-Corresponding Secretary; Tom Dennie-Treasurer, and Carolyn French-Secretary/Treasurer. A Board of Directors will be formed in future meetings.

The Fellows' DREAM reflects the spirit of self-determination, empowerment, and group cohesion. The Fellows want to focus in 2004 to obtain their nonprofit status, to organize a massive voting campaign among residents, and to get funds for training and housing development initiatives.

The Challenge of Public Housing in America and in Korea

by
Jose Gomez



Dr. Jose Gomez,
Specialist
Community & Economic
Development Program

Faculty and students of the MSU-Construction Management Program met staff from the MSU Community and Economic Development Program (CEDP) on December 19, 2003 at Farrall Hall to exchange their experiences in public housing in America and in Korea. Dr. Matt Syal and Andrew Sidel hosted

the meeting. MSU graduate assistants and the group of Korean students joined Urban Planning Professor and State Director of the CEDP, Dr. Rex LaMore, and Specialist Dr. Jose Gomez to share valuable experience and learn from each other.

This exchange stimulated MSU faculty and the Korean students to explore the challenges and issues facing both countries in providing affordable housing. Korean students are young professionals working in executive positions at the Korean National Housing Corporation (KNHC) with degrees in accounting, urban planning, architecture, civil engineering, and business administration. These young professionals have worked for KNHC between fifteen and twenty years and are at MSU-Construction Management Program since October 2003 receiving special training under the guidance of Dr. Matt Syal. The group discussed various issues that included production volume, land acquisition, target population, and other issues shaping the future of public housing in both countries.

KNHC was founded in 1962, it has built more than 1.36 million housing units, the world's highest housing construction record by a single entity. This year, the company has provided more than 70,000 residences, 10,000 more than the initial plan, including 48,000 public rental units for households with scarce income. After downsizing, the Corporation employs a workforce of 3,000 employees. The organization plans to develop one million units in the next ten years¹.

Public Housing in America is going through many changes as part of the welfare reform. In general, the American public housing system is decreasing in

number of housing available to very low and low-income residents. The American recession and the federal deficit are already affecting many federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), agency that handles most public housing. Federal policy has produced more demolition of public housing than new construction, which has been replaced with "paper" instruments such as Section 8 Vouchers. HUD's mixed-income initiative is after financial feasibility, getting away from those unable to pay market rate rental. America is unwilling to expand its welfare systems in spite of growing numbers of people in need of assistance. Public housing waiting lists are three or four years behind, with many authorities closing the possibilities for new applicants. Great emphasis is on homeownership, self-sufficiency, and market-driven instruments that will shape public housing during this decade.

In contrast, South Korean's public housing faces new challenges such as a growing homelessness² and unemployment, both issues without precedent since World War II. Korea's financial crisis of 1997³ will probably have an impact on public housing. The attempt of the Korean government to cool the housing market by building more public housing might be defeated if the International Monetary Fund requests more financial constraints on public projects. Korean public housing market is attempting to reach lower income residents, building record number of housing, and providing professional opportunities to its young executives, such as the training provided to the Korean students at Michigan State University-Construction Management Program.

(Footnotes)

¹ KNHC Improves Living Standards. http://kn.koreaherald.co.kr/SITE/data/html_dir/2003/12/13/200312130017.asp

² South Korea: Homeless multiply as unemployment surges. <http://search.netscape.com/ns/boomframe.jsp?query=public+housing>

³ Sunwoo Lee and In-Jae Lee. <http://search.netscape.com/ns/boomframe.jsp?query=public+housing>

Inkster UP! date

by
Jose Gomez

More than forty-five organizations and individuals have been invited to join the efforts of MSU Public Housing Fellow Bobbie Wallace in Inkster. As it was described somewhere else in this newsletter, Bobbie with technical assistance from MSU-Community and Economic Development Program is organizing existing resources to better serve community needs in her hometown, of Inkster. This new entity is named Inkster UP!

So far, a good group of about twelve organizations have joined the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee divided the many tasks involved in four committees: Facilities, Assessment, Programming, and Grants. Inkster UP! has developed a mission statement, and has set goals and objectives for 2004. The Inkster UP! group, assisted by Linda Patrick of MSU Extension-Genesee County, obtained approval from MSU-Urban and Regional Planning Program to include Inkster UP! as a project for the Practicum Class 2004. The City of Inkster will provide the funding needed for the Practicum. One of the Committees will focus its efforts in developing a grant proposal to the MSU-Families and Communities Together Coalition (FACT) due February 6, 2004. Another Committee will prepare a proposal for the School District regarding the project involving the building of former Blanchette Middle School. Mr. Lionel Rayford, executive director of Ecorse Public Housing Commission is assisting in obtaining the nonprofit status for Inkster UP!. SEMCA (Southeast Michigan Community Alliance) has provided space and has facilitated many meetings.

Inkster UP! appreciates all those already involved in the planning of this organization, as well as invites any organization interested in joining the effort. For more information, please call Bobbie Wallace at (734) 722-3738 or (734) 595-9813, or Celeste Starks and Jose Gomez at (517) 353-9555.



Public Housing Team

from left to right

Celeste Starks, Johnna Matthews, Bernard Gwekwerere, Kristen Huber, Dr. Jose Gomez



*In memory of MSU Public Housing Fellow
Elizabeth Anderson, River Rouge
Commissioner
deceased November 2003*

Public Housing Team and Community & Economic Development Program Staff

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
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