

Rockland Remembers Rose Shay

The Rose Shay Community Room was officially named at a March 7 event at the Rockland Towers Development. Family, local politicians, neighbors and friends gathered for a luncheon to remember the community activist who recently passed away at the age of 88. Mayor Thomas M. Menino joined with the Shay family to unveil a plaque that will hang in the community room, dedicated in her name.

Rose lived in Rockland Towers, which she affectionately referred to as “the house,” since 1980. When she wasn’t out advocating for the people of West Roxbury, she was found sitting in her red chair in the community room often playing a friendly game of cards.

Sarah Hall, a tenant leader at the site, and a group of Rockland residents decided to name the community room after Rose in honor of all of the work she did for tenants in the development and for her tireless efforts to improve the complex.



At the ceremony, Mayor Menino praised Rose’s contributions to the City of Boston.

“There are lots of Roses in our city who do work for us and don’t want any credit,” said Menino. “People like Rose are heroes and what makes Boston work.”

Deputy Administrator of the BHA Bill McGonagle remembered Rose as an advocate for the elderly who spoke proudly of her family.

“When I was the Area Director, a week would not go by that I didn’t speak to Rose,” explained McGonagle. “You always knew she was thinking about you and praying for you.”

After a catered lunch, those in attendance took time to share their personal remembrances of Rose and reflect on the person she was.

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Whittier Begins After-School Program

On February 10, the Whittier Street Development held an open house and sign up for a new after-school program being offered to the site's youth. The sign up was a success with 18 kids between the ages of eight and twelve registering. At the event, which was held in the development's community center, the children were entered into a contest. Xin Yu, won a new video game system for having the best report card.

One of the programs scheduled to take place at the center includes "FITKIDS" an exercise and healthy weight program for adolescent girls. The Whittier Street Community Health Center will also be on site working with parents on health issues and



Xin Yu poses with his new video game system. Xin won the prize for having the best report card.



Eighteen kids from the Whittier Street Development signed up for the new after-school program.

Resident Health Advocates will be assigned to the center to work with participants on a wide range of issues.

In addition, students from Northeastern University will tutor youth three days a week and Boston Center for Youth and Families street workers will be on hand to assist kids. Also, program organizers are hopeful that they will be able to work with Roxbury Community College to begin a community technology program to teach kids how to use computers and assist them with science projects.

The Whittier Street After-School Program is a collaboration between the BHA, Pastor Hogan of Good Shepard Church and coordinator Bob Bell, a divinity student at Harvard University.

Have Ideas for Newsletter Stories?

The BHA wants your input!

- Help develop story ideas for the BHA Today Newsletter, write articles or submit artwork.

Contact:

Boston Housing Authority
Communications Department
617-988-4109

WB Neighbors Help Dig out After Blizzard

When Diane Applegate looked out the window of her West Broadway apartment on the morning of January 24 she expected to see mountains of fluffy, white snow blanketed over the development, but instead she saw Christopher McQueen and his sister Kaylee shoveling her walkway and digging out her car.

In the aftermath of one of the largest snowstorms ever in the City of Boston, which dumped more than 22 inches on the region, the McQueen family banded together to assist their neighbors and friends at West Broadway.

"There was so much snow I couldn't even open my door," explained Diane. In addition, her car was buried beneath layers of ice and snow and the sidewalks were impossible to navigate. But the McQueen kids worked for three days to clear walkways, sidewalks and several of their neighbors' cars. They created pathways and made sure residents could get out of their apartments.

Diane has lived at West Broadway with her husband Walter all of her life. During the time in which

the McQueens have lived next door, Diane has gained a great deal of admiration for them. She proudly says she has never met a more close knit family, including the mother who helped shovel and the father who Diane has known since she used to baby-sit him years ago.

"They're an outstanding family," said Diane. "There aren't enough good things I can say about them."



Crew from "Oil Storm" Shoots Scene at Old Colony

The crew for an upcoming TV movie was at the Old Colony Development in South Boston to film a scene on March 4. The film, which combines real interviews with experts and dramatized segments, depicts a scenario in which the US must cope with a sudden oil shortage. The scene at Old Colony involved a group of frustrated citizens pulling a driver out of an oil truck. The movie will be shown on FX. In appreciation for permission to shoot on the site, the production company, George IV Productions, made donations to the Old Colony Tenant Association and to the Senior Center.



MissionWorks Working to Sustain Services

Group attempting to raise money to continue programs started by HUD grant

Mission Main housing development residents have worked hard to get more bang for their fundraising buck to ensure that critical self-sufficiency programs continue following the end of a five-year grant from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

This program continues the important work that the five-year federal HOPE VI grant started. Under this Hope VI grant, Mission Main was completely rebuilt physically. Equally important, the grant included a five-year social service component that provided residents with the tools they needed to become self-sufficient and improve their quality of life through education and job training.

With this funding from HUD ending soon, residents are concerned about sustaining the health of their community and want to provide tenants with continued access to these services.

To date, MissionWorks (formerly Mission Main Resident Service Corporation) has been particularly successful in supporting its program for residents. More than \$1.9 million of funding beyond what has been provided through the HUD HOPE VI grant has been successfully leveraged for the direct benefit of the Mission Main residents. To date, 456 residents have received employment preparation services, 112 residents have been placed into jobs, 108 residents have received training and employment services, 59 residents have enrolled in GED classes, 60 residents have enrolled in ESOL classes, and 56 residents enrolled in homeownership counseling programs.



“They [MissionWorks] help you succeed at points in your life when you think there is no hope. I found my hope here and I found my dreams here. Thanks,” said Everett O’Neil, a Mission Main resident who participated in the social service program.

MissionWorks’ approach is unusual. Core services are provided in the development’s community center so residents are able to easily access the services and feel at home. Partnerships are developed for more specialized programs, such as adult education and job training, avoiding duplication of services.

In addition to its importance for residents, maintaining the stability of the neighborhood is critical to the well being of the wider Mission Hill community – a community that includes the Colleges of the Fenway, the “Avenue of the Arts” institutions, Northeastern University, Longwood Medical Area, and Boston Medical Center as well as many smaller for-profit and non-profit businesses.

Many public housing residents have long been isolated from the community at large partially out of self-preservation and partially from a lack of acceptance from other community members. MissionWorks’ approach creates a bridge from the developments to the resources that surround them, enabling residents to gradually move into the mainstream economy at their doorstep.



BHA Joins Mayor's Campaign to Spread Word on Tax Credits and Financial Literacy

The Boston Housing Authority has once again joined Mayor Thomas M. Menino's campaign for the Earned Income Tax Credit and Financial Literacy. The BHA has conducted an extensive outreach program in order to inform residents of the availability of tax assistance programs throughout the City of Boston. Approximately 8,000 fliers touting free tax preparation sites and financial education programs were sent out to tenants at BHA sites in January.

If you worked and earned less than \$36,000, you may be eligible to claim the earned income tax credit (EITC). Last year, 388 BHA residents had their taxes prepared for free. The result was a total of \$495,098 in federal tax refunds and \$118,995 in state refunds for a combined total of \$614,093. The average EITC credit for BHA residents was \$1,275. These tenants were able to use their refunds to pay off bills or add to their savings accounts.

The free preparation sites opened January 29, 2005. If you are interested, please bring the following:

- Photo ID for you and your spouse, if applicable.
- Social Security Cards for you, your spouse, your children and other dependents.
- All W-2 forms (earning statements) for you and your spouse for every employer during 2004.
- All 1099 forms (including 1099G for any government payments, such as unemployment payments and 1099R for any pension payments received).
- Total of payments made for childcare expenses as well as the name, address and SSN of child care provider.
- Form 1098 (tuition payment statement) for each household member who attended college in 2004 and the total amount of student loan interest paid.
- Total rent paid in 2004.
- Your checkbook or account number for Direct Deposit.
- Any correspondence from the Internal Revenue Service.
- ***If possible***, a copy of 2003 Federal or Massachusetts tax return

Below is a listing of participating tax prep sites. For more information visit www.bostontaxhelp.org

ACORN

1486 Dorchester Ave 2nd Floor
Dorchester, MA 02122
p:(617)436-7100

Codman Square Health Center

637 Washington St.
Dorchester, MA 02124
p:(617)474-1445

Dorchester House Multi-Service Center

1353 Dorchester Avenue
Dorchester, MA 02122
p:(617)474-1415

Citywide Boston Hispanic Center

178 Tremont Street
Boston, MA 02108
p:(617)348-6567

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Tax Credits and Financial Literacy

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Dorchester NSC

22 Beechwood St.
Dorchester, MA 02124
p:(617)288-2700

Elm Hill FSC

22 Elm Hill Ave.
Roxbury, MA 02119
p:(617)442-5900 x 203

East Boston APAC

21 Meridien St.
East Boston, MA 02128
p:(617)567-8857

**Hispanic Office of Planning & Evaluation
(HOPE)**

165 Brookside Ave. Ext.
Boston, MA 02130
p:(617)524-8888 x 141

Hyde Park High School

655 Metropolitan Avenue
Hyde Park, MA 02136
p:(617) 918-5340

Jamaica Plain APAC

753 Centre Street
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
p:(617)522-4250 x22

Jackson-Mann Community Center

500 Cambridge St.
Allston, MA 02134
p:(617)635-5153

JVS Center for Careers and Lifelong Learning

29 Winter Street
Boston, MA 02108
p:(617)399-3235

Learning Works/Temple Place

19 Temple Pl.
Boston, MA 02111
p:(617)357-6000 x 7512

Parker Hill Fenway NSC

714 Parker St.
Roxbury, MA 02120
p:(617)445-6000 x 232

Mattapan FSC

535 River St.
Mattapan, MA 02126
p:(617)298-2045

Roxbury Resource Center

2201 Washington St.
Roxbury, MA 02119
p:(617)989-9150

South Boston APAC

424 W. Broadway
South Boston, MA 02127
p:(617)269-5160 x 147

South End Neighborhood Action Program

554 Columbus Ave.
Boston, MA 02118
p:(617)267-7400 x227

**South Boston Employment &
Training Resource Center**

489 East Broadway
South Boston, MA 02127
p:(617)635-0771

Southside Head Start

19 Corinth Street
Roslindale, MA 02131
p:(617)348-6239

Remembering Longtime Amory Resident James “JJ” Jackson

By The Amory Street Tenant Task Force

Mr. James Jackson was a resident at Amory Street in Jamaica Plain since 1979. He played an active role in the building’s social activities and worked in both the Fair Food Program and the Boston Food Banks Program for many years.

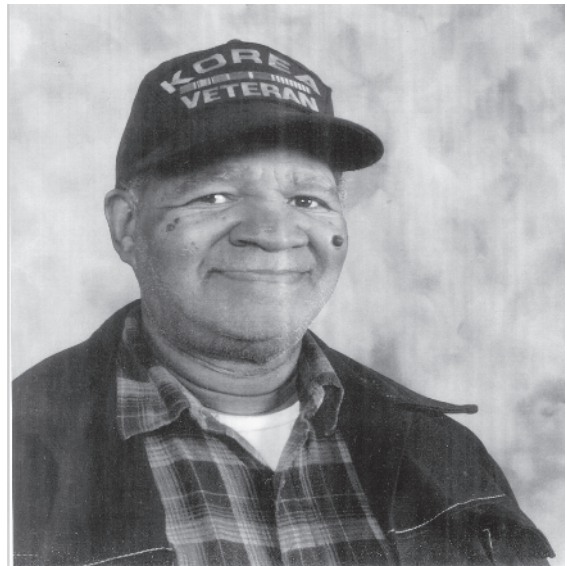
JJ, as he was called, was an original founder of the Boston Housing Authority Grievance Panel and served on the Panel for twenty-eight years. Mr. Jackson initiated the negotiations with HUD to create a Grievance Panel for public housing tenants in Boston. In his role as a panel member, he was an avid advocate for all BHA residents.

Between the years 1987 through 1990, JJ served as an alternate on the Amory Street Task Force. From 2002 through 2003 he was the Task Force Vice President. In his role as a Task Force member he was able to make many friends and was always a recognizable person in the Amory Street community. It became an Amory Street tradition that JJ would trim the lobby Christmas tree, as he did this past Christmas.

In addition to all of his other responsibilities and many health issues, JJ always found time to participate in building functions and would always volunteer his time to act as the building DJ. He purchased his own DJ equipment and had an extensive music library with classic blues and jazz selections going back to the 1920s. Each Saturday, JJ hosted Blues in the afternoon and along with Wayne “Skippy” Martin, a BHA police officer who recently retired, created “Blues Night” at Amory and other BHA elderly properties. He would bring down his equipment and play music for the residents’ enjoyment in the community room and on many occasions would invite residents from other developments.

JJ filled this building with the joys of shaking of the head and patting the foot. He knew that this was the kind of social medicine that everyone needed to uplift their spirits and fill the void in their souls. Music is a universal language and JJ Jackson had a masterful touch when he was in the DJ seat. We know that we will hear those sweet sounds again coming from the community room in the sky and know that Amory’s Spin- Master JJ Jackson is on the scene.

Godspeed from all of us to Mr. James “JJ” Jackson. He will be greatly missed, not just among the residents and staff at Amory Street, but also by his many friends throughout the BHA.



Rockland Remembers Rose Shay

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Rose’s daughter Mary said, “my mother would have loved this dedication and she would have been very proud of what everyone accomplished together.”

Prior to moving to Rockland, Rose lived at the Cathedral Development in the South End, where she raised her four children. In all Rose spent 52 years living in BHA owned property.

St. Botolph Celebrates Black History Month

Residents of the St. Botolph Development in the Back Bay joined together on Friday, February 25 to celebrate Black History Month and to recognize noteworthy achievements of some residents. Chris Tucker, The resident service coordinator from Peabody Management, emceed the event, the first of its kind to be held at the site.

Honorees included Sadie Savage, Marshall Clark, Reverend Charles Paige, Gladys Wright, William Moore and Nellie Brunson. Each received an award of appreciation for the work they have done in their community and the special achievements they have accomplished in their lives.

Sadie Savage (pictured below) was recognized for her loyalty and diligence to community volunteer work; Nellie Brunson for her outstanding service during World War II, when she helped build airplanes; Gladys Wright for her endless support, guidance and love for her family; William Moore, who turned down a Purple Heart, for his outstanding service to his country during the Korean War; Marshall Clark, who was drafted by the New York Yankees, for his outstanding community service and accomplishments in baseball; and Reverend Charles Paige



for his outstanding service to God and country.

The event included many renditions of songs and poems including a stirring performance of “Amazing Grace” by resident Curtis Shellnot

“Curtis can really sing, it was incredible; it was beautiful,” said resident Roger McNeil.

Another gripping performance was provided by Bernie Brown, whose reading of “Steal Away” was well received by everyone in attendance.

During the festivities, a catered lunch was provided to the large group gathered in the community room.

“This is a good thing,” said Ted Hampton, a member of the Resident Advisory Board. “It’s been fun watching it all come together.”

The event was a large success thanks for the most part because of the work of the St. Botolph Tenant Task Force and its Entertainment Committee consisting of Michelle Sanders, Pat Wade, Kathy Johnson and Curtis Shellnot.

BHA Resident Service Coordinator Gloria Johnson helped out at the event and Manager Mary Cross, who was on vacation, attended as well.

BHA Today is a Boston Housing Authority publication and a BHA 2001 initiative.

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