



NEW DIMENSIONS

ELDERLY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT & OPERATIONS CORPORATION

Winter 2013

Keeping Seniors at Home but Not Alone

I still hear the screams of Vera saying, “get me out of here”. Vera was a widow that I met that ended up in a nursing home when she was no longer able to live independently in her subsidized housing unit. Vera tried to escape several times unsuccessfully. She was soon released but she could not live alone at home or afford a private room in an assisted living facility which can cost more than \$48,000/year. Fortunately, her service coordinator heard of this new model of affordable assisted living that allows low income seniors to remain at home with adequate services. Vera received help with daily living activities such as bathing, dressing, managing medications, ambulation, 24-hour supervision by certified nursing assistants, three meals a day, housekeeping and laundry. Vera celebrated her 105th birthday and when asked how she was feeling she responded “right now, due to the work of these people right here... I’m almost ready to walk without any help.”

I think it is a moral and financial issue and that is why we created this

new model of service enriched housing back in 1996 in Miami. We now work in twenty-three states. In 2003 I met with both U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and asked them to work together to support and fund service enriched housing. In 2010 HUD and HHS announced they were partnering in creating the Community First Option program aimed at keeping disabled and seniors at home, with an initial allocation of \$46 million. We are no longer working against the wind, even the Healthcare reform includes funding for this type of model.

Unfortunately only one in six residents that need this type of care currently gets it. The demographics are irrefutable. The number of low income seniors is growing exponentially but not so the stock of affordable housing with services.

Steve Protulis, Executive Director of EHD OC, says that not a day goes by without one of the residents begging to remain at home. “I believe it is criminal to provide elderly housing without adequate services to allow these individuals to age in place.”

“However, there are few such programs in existence today and our residents who rely on government Medicaid support are stuck attempting to remain independent or being forced prematurely in to an expensive and emotionally debilitating nursing home”, he added. The concept of keeping low income seniors in place has become increasingly popular because it saves significant government funding. A nursing home bed costs \$48,000/year. Services at this new affordable assisted living facility cost \$18,000/year. The program has proven to save considerable healthcare costs by keeping these seniors in good health away from hospitals and emergency rooms. The program is not only replicable but sustainable. A well-managed program produces a good operating margin, creates new jobs and neighborhood revitalization. “It is a win-win situation”, added Steve Protulis. “We allow our residents to live their lives with dignity in the comfort of their own homes while generating new revenues and jobs and cutting Medicare and Medicaid costs”.

*By Conchy Bretos
CEO of mia Senior Living Solutions*



Elderly Housing Development
& Operations Corporation

Mission Statement

EHD OC develops and manages safe, secure and affordable housing for senior citizens across the United States. EHD OC advocates for the highest quality of life for the seniors of today and tomorrow.

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Executive Director's Views

By Steve Protulis

Has the Federal Government Turned it's Back on Affordable Senior Housing?

Given the tremendous need, cost effectiveness, and multiple benefits of senior housing for older Americans and their families, as well as to tax payers, it is difficult to understand why the Federal Government seems to have turned its back during the past couple years and walked away from vulnerable low-income seniors who need affordable housing.

Of particular concern is that the recently adjourned 112th Congress did not provide any funds (ZERO) for the construction of any additional senior housing funded through the Section 202 program. EHD OC and other non-profit organizations have relied on the Section 202 program linked with rent subsidy to construct and operate affordable housing for very low-income older residents.

EHD OC and other sponsors of Section 202 senior housing have hundreds of eligible seniors on our multi-year waiting lists. A recent AARP study reported that nationwide there are on average ten eligible seniors on waiting lists for every Section 202 senior housing apartment that becomes available each year.

In addition to the present critical need for affordable senior housing, the elderly population is projected to significantly increase over the next few years. The Congressional Senior Commission, that I was honored to be appointed to, projected a need of a minimum of 40,000 units of senior housing annually and that was in 2001! We are dangerously short of that number. Yet, shockingly and disappointing to many seniors, the funding priorities of the 112th Congress threatened to shut down the federal government over any effort to raise even limited revenues from the wealthiest



members of our society. The 112th Congress was willing to cut federal funds for housing, health care and services needed by the elderly. The 112th Congress was the only Congress during the 50-year history of the successful Section 202 senior housing program to provide no Section 202 funds for construction. Over the previous 20 years, Congress had funded on average of 6,000 units of Section 202 senior housing per year.

Without the Section 202 program, many low-income seniors would not be able to find suitable and affordable housing. A recent HUD study reported that worst case housing needs grew by nearly 1.2 million households, or more than 20 percent, from 2007 to 2009 and by 42 percent since 2001. "Worst case housing needs" are defined as low-income households who paid more than half their monthly income for rent and/or lived in severely substandard housing. HUD reports that 19% of worst case housing needs are elderly households without children. The only option left for "affordable" housing is tax credits. However, because of the financial requirements, tax credit senior housing has rents that exceed what the majority of our current residents are able to pay. Tax credit properties do not serve the low income seniors that are in the greatest need of housing. EHD OC is determined to find ways to bridge the gap so that we can provide housing for low income seniors.

In this inaugural address, President Obama stated "We reject the belief that America must choose between caring for a generation that built this country and investing in a generation that will build it's future." While we endorse this statement, we must also make sure that caring for the generation that built this country includes affordable housing that is so greatly needed.

Continued on page 5

*President's Comments**By Morton Bahr**The Heart in "Housing with a Heart"*

Some four years ago when Steve Protulis asked me to come on the Board of Directors of the Elderly Housing Development and Operations Corporation (EHDOC), I did so although I had little knowledge of the company and the services it provided in our communities. After attending my first board meeting, I was totally sold. I was amazed at the quality of EHDOC's staff, the commitment they had to the company and the people they served. More than anything, however, I discovered that Steve not only led the company, but his enthusiasm was clearly contagious. After that experience I was firmly committed to add whatever I could to EHDOC's mission.

I cannot stress the mission enough. It is not a word that is thrown out carelessly. In fact, one could not talk with Steve for half an hour without him speaking of our mission. Every EHDOC employee is aware of and supports the mission. It is quite easy to comprehend. As President of EHDOC, I am constantly aware of that mission. Simply stated, "I will do everything in my power to make today an even better day than yesterday for all of our residents."

A professional and caring staff and commitment to our mission is why our residents enjoy independent living well into their 90s and why there is a long waiting list at virtually each of our 55 buildings. I need to point out that EHDOC serves the low-income seniors, people who live at or below the poverty level. Unfortunately, there are not many choices these folks have available to them. EHDOC is a product of the American Labor Movement. Our buildings are built union and our bargaining unit type employees are all

union members working under a labor agreement. For more than 100 years, labor leaders have continued the fight for retirement with dignity for all workers. Clearly, one cannot have dignity without a decent place to live and EHDOC provides that to all of our residents. Every building is staffed with a Community Manager, Assistant Manager, Service Coordinator and Maintenance Staff. This configuration varies somewhat depending on the size of the building and the number of residents. For the purpose of this column, I want to discuss the role of the Service Coordinator. All of our Service Coordinators do exceptional work. As an example of the work they all do, I am going to use Johnson Towers in Washington D.C. The Service Coordinator's major responsibility is to interface with the residents and assist them wherever possible. From this short narrative you will be able to see how varied the needs of the residents are and how the committed Service Coordinator deals with them. At Johnson Towers, the post is filled by Patrice Anderson who has served since June 2010.

"I will do everything in my power to make today an even better day for all of our residents."

The main focus of preparing the Service Coordinator, is continuous education. Ms. Anderson received continuing education credits in: "Senior Healthy Living," "Alzheimer's Disease - Unraveling the Mystery," and "How to Deal with Addiction and Other Mental Diseases." She also has received local training on "going green," "Medicaid and Medicare," and "Hoarding and Pest Management."

In the private housing sector it is normal for the residents to be relocated when the building is undergoing major alteration. Not at EHDOC properties! This major renovation was done with residents in place and with union labor creating over 75 jobs and investing just over \$2 Million in preserving this property. During the renovations that took place at Johnson Towers in 2011-12, programs were provided through a network of community providers to residents. These programs included:

- A daily prepared lunch from a local restaurant
- Senior fitness using the Nintendo Wii game console
- Arts and crafts with tools and materials supplied by Powell and Thurgood Marshall Elementary Schools

The Service Coordinators arrange all sorts of programs and services to ensure a normal and routine living condition. As an example, Ms. Anderson arranged with the Washington Elderly and Handicap Transportation Service (WEHTS) to transport seniors on grocery shopping trips as well those who participate with the Barney Neighborhood House for senior activities and trips.

All of our staff recognizes that our residents are all part of a larger community and work to make them feel as such. Johnson Towers has a good relationship with the District's at-large councilmember (Ward 4) who assists with job placement for those of our residents who desire to work. The relationship is reciprocated.

Continued on page 7

EHDOC Seniors Offering Helping Hands to the Victims of Super Storm Sandy

In the wake of Super Storm Sandy, one of the largest natural disasters in U.S. History, EHDOC and our residents throughout the country stepped up to the plate to help those in need. With some of our residents in Connecticut directly affected by the storm, fellow residents and staff at all of our properties began to organize fundraisers to help those that were directly touched by the storm.

The EHDOC Senior Relief Fund was the perfect fit to help those who lost everything including their homes. Our Community Managers immediately began organizing fundraisers at their properties to help those in need. Residents and employees contributed their time and energy to the relief efforts in helping raise \$28,601.47.

EHDOC continues to encourage community involvement through our Community Action Program (CAP) which was created to link participation between our

residents and the neighboring community. Our properties were very creative in organizing everything from bake sales to dinners and even craft fairs.

We would like to congratulate Robert Sharp Towers I & II for raising the most money at \$2,114. They coordinated one of their fundraising events with Election Day. Being able to sell refreshments to those waiting in line to cast their votes was a huge success.

Every EHDOC property throughout the country participated in these relief efforts. The top 5 EHDOC properties whose per-capita fundraising efforts were the highest are:

5. Sunshine Center Apartments- Leesville, LA
4. Palermo Lakes- Miami, Florida
3. Our Lady's Manor- Alexandria, LA
2. South Boston- Boston, MA
1. Spring Rock Park- Leeds, ME

Supper Time! Spring Rock Park Leeds, ME



Spring Rock Park residents held a Baked Bean Supper for the Super Storm Sandy victims on November 24th. Residents, staff, service providers, and resident's family members volunteered. The supper was held at a local church with complimentary access to their facilities. Residents at Spring Rock also held a community bottle drive in conjunction with three area redemption centers. Spring Rock Residents raised \$660.00 for Sandy victims.

New Fundraising Efforts Lloyd McBride Court and Lynn Williams Apts. Pittsburgh, PA



With the assistance of Kim Przybylinski, a local Avon representative, a new and different way that the residents of Lloyd McBride Court and Lynn Williams Apartments of Pittsburgh, PA, raised funds for the victims of Super Storm Sandy was by purchasing Avon products. Flyers with specially priced Avon merchandise were given to the residents and the proceeds from the sale of those items, \$175, was donated to the EHDOC Senior Relief Fund. Kim also donated a gift basket of Avon products for which tickets were sold at \$2 each for a raffle held on Wednesday, November 28th.

Has the Federal Government Turned it's Back on Affordable Senior Housing?

continued from page 2

The key question now is how the recently elected 113th Congress will fund the Section 202 senior housing program in the future. What will be their funding priorities; and will they restore needed funding for the construction of affordable Section 202 senior housing? In addition to compassion concerns that vulnerable low-income elderly have suitable and affordable housing, it is also important to recognize that Section 202 senior housing is also a sound investment of scarce public funds since Section 202 senior housing linked with supportive care has resulted in significant savings of public and private funds for health and long-term care. It is vital, therefore, that seniors, their family and care givers, and others inform our elected officials at every opportunity of both the critical need and potential cost-saving benefits of Section 202 senior housing.

EHDOC Residents Help the Little Ones in Need

A.J. Delorenzo Towers, Bristol, CT



This year, residents at AJ Delorenzo Towers sponsored three children with school supplies and first day of school outfits. The Adopt-A-Child Program is sponsored throughout the United Way, it is designed to link children in need of clothing and school supplies with volunteers willing to make a donation.

Seniors Join Forces to Raise Money for Victims of Super Storm Sandy



Robert Sharp Towers I & II
Miami Gardens, FL
Hosted a BBQ where
residents raised over
\$2,000



Torre Jesus Towers, Bayamon, PR-Hosted a Flea Market sale to raise money for Sandy's Victims



Hugh Carcella, Reading, PA
Hosted a food sale, where
residents sold chili and
baked goods



Chateau Cushnoc &
John Mervin Towers,
Augusta, ME-
Residents held a Bake
Sale raising \$443.00

EHDOC's Commitment to Senior Wellness

"Sweatin' to the Oldies" Robert Sharp Towers, Miami Gardens, FL



In an effort to arrange an Aerobics Class geared to seniors, Jo-Anne Miles, Service Coordinator at Robert Sharp I came in contact with a company that provided such classes at no charge to the residents. They were assigned instructor, Marla Chasse, who over the years has become one of their own.

She provided the exercise classes to the music of the "oldies" songs that residents love. She formulated the exercises to help with balance, hand-eye coordination, memory, stretching, cardio stimulation and more. She often had participants singing along as they exercised, and she joined in. Marla sometimes used music that appealed to different ethnic groups. Everyone left with a smile and a hug.

Residents were devastated when a few years into the program, they learned that funding for the class was no longer available. Jo-Anne immediately attempted to find another sponsor for the class. Several possibilities came about, but Marla had already come to her with a plan of her own.

A friend of hers had volunteered at one of Sharp's prior events, and was very taken by the seniors, the programs and the building. She was so happy to learn about the SC Program and could see how the seniors benefited from the classes and activities; she offered to personally sponsor Marla to continue the class one day a week. Marla was pleased, but she felt the seniors needed the exercise at least 2 days per week, and she volunteered to teach the 2nd class at no cost.

This class has continued for nearly 8 years at this time. Marla has not only provided her regular classes, she has provided special classes such as Meditation, Aqua Therapy, Good Nutrition, and Balance and Posture Work-out.

Her dedication is warm and genuine to the residents and the staff, and she is always willing to go that extra mile whenever she is needed. Robert Sharp is fortunate to have both Marla and Sylvia Bennett, her sponsor, involved in programs not only for their selfless generosity, but for their sincere interest in the community.

Balance your way to a Stronger Body La Maison Acadienne, Madawaska, ME



Dr. Thomas Gregson, a local chiropractor came to La Maison Acadienne to assess residents' balance. Dr. Gregson brought in some state of the art equipment designed to assess peoples' balance.

Eighteen residents came to meet the doctor and have their balance tested. Many were surprised at how little balance they had and expressed concern. Dr. Gregson discussed how some surgeries, medications and illnesses have an impact on balance. He also discussed the impact exercise and proper nutrition has on balance.

The Heart in "Housing with a Heart"

Continued from page 3

Virtually all of our residents are registered to vote – and do vote. In fact, for many of our buildings around the country, EHDOC buildings are where you come to vote.

The community involvement includes the Service Coordinator networking with various Home Health Care Providers, while developing a working relationship with the local Metro Police Department to ensure and enhance resident safety. Johnson Towers has partnered with the Capital Area Food Bank, D.C. Dept. of Energy, Catholic Charities, and Second Time Around to refer tenants to discount telephone bills, food distribution and other programs that the D.C. area has for seniors.

The residents in all EHDOC properties are encouraged to form a Resident Association with elected officers. The Service Coordinator interacts with the Association and assists them to accomplish their goals. Ms. Anderson assisted the Association with putting on a parade to make the community aware that the seniors here at Johnson Towers are very much alive and are willing to work in and with the community.

In a 2001 Memorandum of Understanding, then-AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Rich Trumka wrote: "... EHDOC is an arm of organized labor's commitment to social and economic justice, reaching into the low-income senior population and providing a

dignified and secure home to those who would otherwise not be able to afford it. Therefore, EHDOC is seen as the primary agent in the labor movement's work in senior housing."

Now, almost 12 years later, as we begin a new year, it is abundantly clear that under Steve Protulis and the Board of Directors' leadership, the clear vision expressed by Brother Trumka has become a reality and something that the entire labor movement can take great pride in. □

For more information on our communities please visit our website:

www.ehdoc.org

or call us at (954) 835-9200

Out With the Old, In with the New

**Lloyd McBride Court
Pittsburgh, PA**



Helen Crouse, resident of Lloyd McBride

In September 2012, through a program sponsored by Duquesne Light Company, many of the residents of Lynn Williams Apartments and Lloyd McBride Court in Pittsburgh, PA received new refrigerators.

The purpose of the program is to trade older refrigerator models that use a lot of electricity to run them for, new and energy efficient models that use less electricity. By reducing the need for

more electricity to run home appliances, the electric company can cut the need to rely on more power plants which creates a better environmental impact. Since Duquesne Light and their partners in the program removed the refrigerators, up to 90 percent of their parts are being recycled according to U. S. Environmental Protection Agency guidelines decreasing the number of old refrigerators that are being sent to the used appliance market.

Certain criteria applied to those residents who were able to receive the new models. First, the resident had to have a refrigerator that was considered not to be energy efficient, then there were income guidelines that applied. The residents were very happy to get the new refrigerators and the newer models will save the residents money in the long run.

Fraud Alert

**I.W. Abel Place
Pittsburgh, PA**



Mr. Feeney, a retired attorney from the DA's office, an elder himself, and a current elder abuse advocate, came to the property in the heat of the Holiday Season to remind residents that they can be victims of financial exploitation. Residents were told of the many different ways they could be taken advantage of including by family members. All present enjoyed tea and cookies while they discussed the serious issues that they could face. Mr. Feeney loves to tell jokes, so residents were able to learn several techniques and tips to protect themselves in a fun and festive atmosphere.

Resident Corner



Rogely Diaz, Jason Pincus, Commissioner Michael Gorgora, Commissioner Jonah Wolfson, Judge Andrea Wolfson, resident Carmen Gonzalez, Carmen Leon

Zoila Caridad Alvarez was born in Camaguey, Cuba September 3, 1912, and had one brother and five sisters who all remained in Cuba. Her father served in the Cuban military where he was the lead trumpeter, and her mother was a homemaker. Raised in Cuba, Zoila married, was a homemaker and had one daughter, Nelly Reyes. Zoila sought entrance and refuge in the United States arriving in New York in 1972; where at the age of 58, she was accepted as a disabled entrant. She studied English in New York and her daughter, Nelly, began working in a factory making fabrics for dolls. One year later, they moved to Miami Beach where Nelly worked in several stores including Jackson Byrons in Miami. Zoila continued studying the English

Celebrating 100 Years Young Council Towers, Miami, FL

language, and took up painting at Espanola Art Center in Miami Beach where several of her abstract works were put on display, and also at Council Towers South where she presently lives. She painted until she was 87 years old, and drove all her life until 85 years of age.

Curious about life and religion, she was a devotee of the Unity Center on Biscayne Boulevard until 85 years old. Her granddaughter, Clara Bofill says of Zoila that she lived her life, traveled far by ship to Paris and Egypt during her lifetime, and traveled back to New York and visited the State of Wyoming. Well-known for her likeable personality, whenever the Hare Krishnas congregated in front of the Council Towers South building, she'd join in the camaraderie of the moment, dancing along with the troupe.

Although limited in movement now, she will still display some moments of lucidity and humor by going through the story of Little Red Riding Hood with her granddaughter, who teases her with the story, during which Zoila may respond when told "my what a big nose you have," retorting with "you're putting me down," and everyone will have a good laugh. When she visited her neurologist recently and was asked her age, she responded by saying, "I'm 63 and trying to forget it."

Zoila has lived 12-years in Council Towers South, where she is tended to with much love and devotion.

Popeye's Anyone?

South Boston Apartments, Boston, MA

George "Popeye" Kelley moved into South Boston Elderly Apartments in February 2010. We have never met an individual more grateful to be here than George. Before he came to live with us, his living quarters were less than favorable. Now he has made his home his castle and anyone who visits feels like a king! George has had many jobs during his career. He's worked for the phone company, the police department, and even ran one of the first "Popeye's Chicken" establishments. Now he spends his days assisting anyone in the building who needs a helping hand. Running errands, taking individuals to the market, as well as hospital appointments so they do not have to travel on the bus or spend money they don't have on a cab. George is also a member of the board of the "120 H Street Resident Association" and at every cook-out, breakfast or luncheon, Popeye is manning the grill!

Everyone is entitled to bad days; however, we have yet to not see this man's smile every morning as he passes by. Anyone who comes into contact with George is the better for it. Some people come into our lives but for a moment, Popeye's sunny disposition will stay with us for a lifetime!

