



NEW DIMENSIONS

ELDERLY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT & OPERATIONS CORPORATION

Volume 8, No. 2

Summer 2008

Rising Gas, Food Prices Force Seniors to Tighten Belts

Just about every American is feeling the bite of price increases – in gas, groceries, and other essentials. For seniors on fixed incomes, the situation is even worse. With the prices of gasoline, milk, produce, and other necessities rising, people are adapting. For example, many are keeping up with friends by phone rather than face-to-face visits. Others are trying to make ends meet by cutting back on rising grocery bills, substituting canned foods for fresh and using lower-cost recipes that don't include meat.

No one needs to be told that medications are more and more expensive too. The premiums for Medicare co-pays and deductibles as well as related prescription drug programs cost more than a quarter of an average person's Social Security check. A recent AARP survey found

that nearly 60 percent of Americans age 65 and over are having trouble paying for medicine, food, and gas. While during the first part of the year food prices increased more than 6 percent, energy rates soared more than 28 percent. That's compared with an overall price inflation rate of just under 5 percent. And the cost of food continues to rise as the cost of transporting goods keeps rising.

As seniors tighten their belts, all of us are looking ahead to solutions that will bring relief.

Another factor is falling housing prices. Owning a home is the biggest asset for most people. The longer people own their homes, the greater the equity that

accumulates. This allows homeowners to borrow against the equity. Falling home prices mean falling equity. In addition, many financial institutions recently have tightened lending rules in response to the sub-prime mortgage crisis, making loans harder to get. While residents in EHDHC properties don't have to deal with this issue, it does affect many friends and family members.

Seniors are coming up with creative ways to save money, such as stocking up to make fewer trips to the grocery store and making an even greater effort to find discount and on-sale items.

As seniors and their families tighten their belts, all of us are looking ahead to solutions that will bring relief – especially for those on fixed incomes. That's the best reason to vote in November.

EIGHT TIPS FOR SAVING ON GROCERIES

- 1. *Make a list.* Check your cupboards and fridge and make sure you buy only what you need. Organize so you don't make unnecessary trips.
- 2. *Don't shop when you're hungry.* You've heard this one before, but it really is true.
- 3. *Cook more than you need and freeze.* Cook lots and freeze in containers for quick future meals.

- 4. *Shop for specials.* But don't buy what you don't need just because it's on sale.
- 5. *Try store brands.* In most cases, brand name and generic foods are produced in the same factories, and store brands are always cheaper.
- 6. *Use store savings cards.* They can save you lots of money.
- 7. *Buy staple items in bulk.* Necessities

- such as toilet paper, paper towels, laundry detergent – all are cheaper when you buy them in large quantities, and on sale. They don't go bad, so stock up.
- 8. *Use leftovers.* Make a list of leftovers and put on the fridge so you don't forget what's there. Some leftovers can be "recycled" – such as using leftover meat for stews and sauces.

EHDHC's accomplishments as of July 2008:

48 Properties managed across the US and Puerto Rico

5,000 Seniors housed and serviced in EHDHC properties



Elderly Housing Development
& Operations Corporation

Mission Statement

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

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Elderly Housing Development &
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Executive Director's Column

By Steve Protulis

Senior Housing: Seeking Solutions



Providing quality, affordable housing for low-income seniors in America is the heart of EHDOC's mission. Yet there's a monumental shortage – for the most part unnoticed – of available housing. For each affordable housing unit that exists, there are 10 eligible seniors on waiting lists. The average waiting time for a unit to become available is more than 13 months. That can seem like a lifetime to wait for those with limited resources.

Without a comprehensive national policy to meet the affordable housing needs of low-income seniors, many will fall through the cracks or face higher cost alternatives. According to the U.S. Census, there are 3.6 million seniors living below the poverty level – but only 1.1 million receive any sort of housing assistance. The shortage of affordable housing will continue to escalate as baby-boomers retire. By 2030, the senior population will double from 35 to 70 million, with the fastest growth among those 85 and older.

But there seems to be little awareness – or commitment – among our national policy-makers about this "silent crisis." Funds for service providers in senior housing facilities have been cut by 3 percent, while the average

age of the elderly is rising and creating pressure for more services – not fewer.

Legislation to increase support for low-income elderly housing has been introduced in the Senate (S. 2736), and activists are urging Congress to take action. The bill would provide funds to construct 10,000 additional Section 202

In this time of election-year posturing, what could be a better issue for lawmakers to embrace?

(low-income) housing units next year and make it easier and faster to build affordable senior housing, among other things.

In this time of election-year posturing, what could be a better issue for lawmakers to embrace? Soaring gas prices, the nosediving economy, and the mess in Iraq are capturing the headlines. But we cannot let politicians forget that millions of seniors are in crisis because of the affordable housing shortage in addition to the other headline issues. We all are affected by exorbi-

tant gas prices, which are adding to the cost of other necessities such as food and services. These expenses, linked with the crashing economy, are causing many seniors to watch their savings evaporate and their future survival becoming more and more uncertain.

Is this any way to treat America's seniors – the people who worked hard, and built the world's strongest, most prosperous, and fastest growing economy after World War II? Economic conditions have changed dramatically over the past 50 years – for a variety of reasons. But our nation without question owes a debt of gratitude to those who fought in wars and held the homefront down to preserve and protect American values. Attempts to cut Medicare and privatize Social Security – along with the failure of legislators to address the lack of affordable housing and the prescription drug cost crisis – are an abysmal way to "thank" America's seniors.

We all should pay attention and look carefully at the records of the politicians who are asking for our votes – from the Presidential contest to state, county, local, and city candidates. And then ask ourselves whose interests they intend to protect.

*Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind it doesn't matter.
-Mark Twain*



President's Column

By Morton Bahr

Unions Push to Put Affordable Housing on National Agenda

One of the major pressing issues facing our nation today is the ongoing decline in the availability of affordable housing for seniors. At the same time, the number of seniors who live at or below the poverty level and who cannot meet the expense of rising housing costs continues to rise.

America's unions, since their inception, have had as the cornerstone of their goals a secure retirement for every U.S. worker. We look at a secure retirement as one where every worker and spouse could spend their post working years with dignity. And we are all aware that there cannot be either security or dignity without a decent place to live as an independent and respected individual.

We are pleased that EHDOP meets that objective for the almost 5,000 seniors

we are privileged to serve. But the growing housing crisis affects all of us.

The continuing demise of defined benefit pension plans, continued loss of good paying jobs to low wage foreign competition and other threats to retirement income put the goal of a secure retirement at risk for more and more union families.

There cannot be either security or dignity without a decent place to live as an independent and respected individual.

Under AFL-CIO President John Sweeney's leadership, labor intends to make a full court press to put affordable senior housing on the nation's agenda. We need to prepare now to bring this

vital issue before the next President and the Congress.

We cannot and should not underestimate the difficulty of this challenge. We, the labor movement and all caring Americans, must be the voice for the tens of thousands of seniors who desperately need housing today as well as for those who will retire in the months and years ahead.

Together, we can respond to the nation's senior housing crisis before it becomes a national calamity. We will need to mobilize and exert pressure on every member of Congress and the White House in our effort to see that sufficient money is allocated within the nation's budget for a substantial increase in housing development to meet the extraordinary needs of our older population.

Short-Takes

Social Security Benefits Available on Debit Cards

Social Security recipients now can opt to receive their monthly benefits directly through a new program that offers a debit MasterCard that is loaded with Social Security benefits. The program is being marketed especially to the four million people who don't have bank accounts and have to pay fees for cashing paper Social Security checks. The debit cards save money by allowing holders to withdraw funds at most banks for free. The card currently is available in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Texas. It will be offered nationwide this summer. Recipients can sign up online (www.usdirectexpress.com) or call 1-877-212-9991. There's no cost to sign up.

Preventing Cervical Cancer Women over age 65 are nearly twice as likely to develop cervical cancer as younger women. See page 7 of this issue of *New Dimensions* for important information. A fact sheet, "Key Facts About

Cervical Cancer, HPV Testing and Older Women," is available free from the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), 815 16th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20006.

Memory Tips: Shorter is Better

All of us struggle with memory sometimes. Experts have developed an idea that can help: reduce the number of syllables in what you want to remember. Our brains process information based partly on how long the information is. Shortening the number of syllables helps with recall. For example, the number 2,545 is easier to remember if it's "two five four five" instead of "two thousand five hundred forty five."
It's worth a try.



In the News

Democracy Comes to the Doorstep *Dino Papavero, Fontana, Calif.*

Action by administrators brought the democratic process to the doorstep of Dino Papavero Senior Center, allowing residents to easily cast their votes in the June 2008 primary election in California. Because of redistricting, the polling place assigned to voters in the Dino Papavero area for the February primary election was in a remote part of Fontana. It was impossible to reach by bus, and driving directions were difficult and confusing. Faced with the disappointment, many seniors reluctantly decided not to vote. Subsequently, Dino Papavero administrators contacted the local board of elections. The registrar studied the situation and decided that the EHDOD facility would be a prime location for a polling place.

So, in June, Dino Papavero served as a polling place for local city and state government elections – much to the joy of the residents as well as members of the surrounding community. The residents now feel that they have more options to have their voices heard, not only by mail-in ballots but by voting in their very own home! They appreciated the convenience of being able to personally drop off their mail-in ballots directly to polling place personnel. For some, it was the first time voting electronically. The Dino Papavero Senior Center continues to be a pillar in the city of Fontana.

Illinois Service Coordinators Conference



Lois McGovern (Prete Apts.) Shashona Chau and Lourdine Biedrzycki (Senate Apts.) all attended the Annual Illinois Service Coordinator Conference where they learned about the current issues facing Service Coordinators and their residents today – with a focus on Illinois issues, networking and programs. Their experiences varied, as this was Shashona's first conference, while Lourdine (who is on the Board of the Illinois Service Coordinator Association) and Lois have attended them before. All of them, regardless of experience, came away renewed.

Fire Safety First/Healthy Living *Robert Sharp Towers I and II, Miami Gardens, Fla.*

Fire Safety: Residents of Robert Sharp Towers I and II recently attended fire extinguisher training, the second part of a three-part program on fire safety. Residents were instructed how to PASS (Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep), along with numerous other safety tips. In session I, fire safety for the elderly, the seniors were reminded of a few fire safety prevention tips. For example, phone calls sometimes interrupt meal preparation. The experts suggest using a handheld timer to remind yourself what you were doing before the phone call and check the stove. Phase III will be on evacuation. This will inform the residents the best exit routes, and what to do if you are in a wheel chair or have any other medical conditions.

Healthy Living: Residents of Robert Sharp Towers celebrated Older Americans Month with a health fair sponsored by All Health Services. The fair offered information and screenings on a variety of subjects such as diabetic supplies, physical therapy, memory screening, counseling and much more. More than 60 seniors attended, and a survey was distributed to participants with a selection of various medical services that residents would like to have available on site.

Bonkers for Babies

Chateau Cushnoc/John Marvin Towers
Augusta, Maine



Generous residents of Chateau Cushnoc/John Marvin Tower collect items for a local food bank.

"Bonkers for Babies" is the name of a community action project begun this spring by Chateau Cushnoc/John Marvin Towers residents. They collect baby food and related items for donation to a local food bank. Officials report that the residents have provided the food bank with enough baby food and items to take care of the needs in the surrounding community.



'Senior Surrey' Makes Its Debut
North Park Village Apartments
Chicago, Ill.

North Park Village Apartments residents no longer have to huff and puff. It's a very long walk from the building to the front gate, and the facility had a shuttle bus that transported residents to the front gate. The bus, however, frequently broke down, making it very difficult for residents to get to the gate to access public transportation. Chicago Alderman Marge Laurino, Chicago Commissioner of Fleet Management Howard Henneman, and Chicago Commissioner of General Services Miche Penne, were instrumental in getting the property a new bus. Resident Lois McGovern won the contest to name the bus. It was christened "Senior Surrey."

Participating in ribbon-cutting ceremonies for North Park Village Apartments' new bus are (from left): Lois McGovern, Karen Simmons, Marjorie Slisz, Howard Henneman, Marge Laurino, and Miche Penne.



Students Bring "Green" to Seniors
Mayfield Manor
Canton, Ohio

Students from Canton Arts Academy, a local grade school, donated "earth boxes" – large planters on casters – to 37 residents of Mayfield Manor to celebrate Older Americans month. The school children, along with parents and teachers, visited to the residents' apartments and assisted them in setting up their planters. They provided the planters, soil, and plants (flowers and/or vegetables). Participating residents enjoyed their interaction with the children and are enjoying a bit of green in their homes.

Students from a local grade school brought "earth boxes" to help Mayfield Manor residents see green.



Celebrating Older Americans
Sunshine Center
Leesville, La.

Residents of Sunshine Center celebrated Older Americans Month with a barbeque and prizes donated by the community. Ella Martin, wearing her crown (straw hat), was honored for being the oldest female in attendance. She also received a gift card.

Age can have its benefits, as Ella Martin discovers.



The Sound of Music
Lloyd McBride Court
Millvale, (Pittsburgh) Pa.

On April 19, members of the Kappa Kappa Psi band fraternity from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA performed for the residents of Lloyd McBride Court. Students ranging from freshmen to seniors in a variety of majors including nursing, business and criminal justice formed a woodwind quartet, a clarinet quintet, and a small vocal ensemble performing classical music, songs from Broadway musicals and pop hits. The residents were encouraged to sing along for a morning of fun entertainment. All of the residents who attended said they enjoyed the performance very much and look forward to the students returning for another program in the fall.

Students from Duquesne University sing for residents of Lloyd McBride Court.



Annie Earl



Helene Williams



Doretha Beverly

90 Years Young

Council House, Marlow Heights, Md.

Smiles lit up as brightly as birthday candles at Council House as residents and staff surprised three residents with a party in celebration of their 90th birthdays. Doretha Beverly, Annie Earl, and Helene Williams were serenaded with a heartfelt "Happy Birthday" by Barbara Greenwell and her friend Ms. Teddy Bear. "They are an inspiration to us all," said a Council House staffer.



Lightening the (Laundry) Load

Clyde F. Simon Lakeview I, Bath, N.Y.

Residents of Clyde F. Simon Lakeview I, know that EHDOD's dedication to quality, affordable housing for seniors is for real. EHDOD is in the process of providing new washers and dryers at all of its facilities so that residents can do their laundry for free. Several washers already are in operation at Lakeview II. Residents are delighted to be able to save all those quarters they previously spent on laundry, and have expressed their sincere gratitude to EHDOD for making it possible.

Every Penny Counts

Lynn Williams Apartments and Lloyd McBride Court, Pittsburgh, Pa.

For the past year, residents of Lynn Williams Apartments and Lloyd McBride Court have been enrolling in a program designed to help them save money on their electric bills. Service Coordinator Denise Botti has enlisted the help of James Harland, Duquesne Light CARES/CAP Case Manager, of Goodwill Southwestern Pennsylvania, to get the residents into the program. Some residents are saving up to as much as \$15 a month on their Duquesne Light bills. The program is income-based. Savings vary from 15-40 percent but even those who get smaller discounts are happy to have a few extra dollars in their pockets.



Saving Lives

North Park, Prete Apts. and Senate Apts. Chicago, Ill.

The Chicago Fire Department recently visited North Park Prete Apartments to teach residents about fire safety. Fire Department personnel distributed informational brochures about fire safety. They offered practical tips, such as when a pot is on the stove and you go into another room, take an oven mitt with you so you won't forget the pot is on the stove. This presentation was well attended by residents of all three buildings on the property. The event was televised and was broadcast on a local evening news program.

Resident Mr. James Coogan of North Park Village Apartments with Commissioner Raymond Orozco, Jr.

What Older Women Should Know About Cervical Cancer Prevention

Adapted from materials provided by the CLUW Cervical Cancer Prevention Works program.



Cervical cancer can be a problem among older women – but there's a new test that can be done along with a regular Pap test that can help protect them.

"Older women may think they don't have to worry about cervical cancer," says Susan Scanlan, president of the National Council of Women's Organizations, "but that's not necessarily true." She notes that women age 65 and older account for nearly 20 percent of all new cervical cancer cases

– and more than 35 percent of all deaths from the disease. In addition, older women who have had hysterectomies where the cervix was not removed also should have screening for cervical cancer protection.

This year, 11,150 women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer and 3,670 will die, according to the American Cancer Society. Cervical cancer is caused by several "high-risk" types of the human papillomavirus (HPV), a commonly sexually transmitted infection that most women have at some point in their lives. Most HPV infections go away on their own, but repeated infections can lead to cervical cancer if abnormal cell changes aren't detected and treated.

There is a new HPV vaccine that has been approved by the FDA for use by girls and young women ages nine to 26. Grandmothers may want to pass this information along to their granddaughters.

The American Cancer Society recommends that women over age 70 should discuss with their health care provider whether or not they should continue screening based on their individual circumstances.

Quick Facts About Cervical Cancer and HPV

Cervical cancer is highly preventable through regular screening.

Cervical cancer is almost always caused by a common virus: human papillomavirus (HPV).

Most women will have HPV at some point in their lives, but few will develop cervical cancer. In fact, most women who get HPV will get rid of the virus through their body's normal healing process.

Only HPV infection that persists for several years can put a woman at risk for cervical cancer.

Screening for cervical cancer can be done by your health care provider using just a Pap test if you're younger than 30 or a Pap and HPV test if you're 30 or older.

A Pap test looks for cell changes in the cervix that might lead to cancer. The HPV test looks for the virus that causes cervical cancer. When used together, the Pap and HPV test can better identify women needing early intervention to prevent cervical cancer.

The HPV test is now approved by the FDA for regular screening in women age 30 and older.

Women should ask their healthcare providers for the test that best meets their screening needs.

In addition, an HPV vaccine is now available for girls and women ages 9-26. Although the vaccine will help prevent many HPV infections, screening will still be needed to prevent cervical cancer.

Trust your own instinct. Your mistakes might as well be your own, instead of someone else's.
-Billy Wilder

Resident Corner



Eleanor Sawyer voiced an interest in playing the piano for the Alzheimer's Center in Gardiner recently so the Resident Service Coordinator made the initial contact with their Activity Coordinator. The unique thing about this is Eleanor is 97 years young and still has a

Volunteering Has No Age Limits

Chateau Cushnoc, Augusta, Maine.

strong desire to help people by volunteering in any way that is suitable for her. The call was made to the Alzheimer's center and the Activity Coordinator called Eleanor back and they sat up a date for Eleanor to visit their facility and play for the folks that reside there. She said when she first arrived she was heartbroken to see these folks suffering in their own world; however she didn't show this concern and played music for them. Eleanor was amazed to see that they sang along with the piano as she listened intently to see if they could. Luckily a friend of Eleanor's knows a resident there, and offered to take Eleanor with her when she visits the friend, so that solved the lack of transportation. Daughter Lynne accompanied Eleanor and spent time with the residents as well. Eleanor is so excited and looking forward to her next visit to

share her love of music with those that are less fortunate than her. This isn't the first time Eleanor has ever volunteered, she and her husband volunteered many years when they were younger. Now she lives alone in her apartment at Chateau Cushnoc and offers her services whenever there is a need for some form of helping others. Eleanor stays busy collecting donations for the local Homeless Shelter such as children's toys, school supplies, or clothing. Her collecting has also provided puzzles and children's books for the local Head Start program, and Box Tops for Education to benefit Gilbert School. She also loves to ride along on the Meals on Wheels route, and guides the driver to the next home for delivery. So, it goes to say as long as there is a will to help others, it doesn't matter what your age is.



EHDOC Service Coordinators continue to answer the call put before them to be of service to the seniors in their communities and beyond. They play a vital role in organizing presentations, events and awareness programs at our properties, as well as keeping up their own education to make sure they and their residents are aware and informed of the latest topics affecting their lives. By our constant vigilance, perseverance and commitment to our residents, we are truly making a difference in the life of each resident. Occasionally we even take some time out for fun and celebrate life with our residents.

Submitted by: Beth Filipiak, Associate Director of Fundraising and Social Service Management

2008 EHDOC Board of Directors Meeting

A moment of relaxation took place at the welcoming reception for guests and dignitaries prior to EHDOC Board of Directors meeting, which took place on February 24-25, in Sunny Isles, Florida. EHDOC President Morton Bahr, Executive Director Steve Protulis, Director Roger Smith, and the other EHDOC officers work to ensure that residents of EHDOC facilities have the best possible facilities, service and quality of life.

