In the spring of 2011, a Federal District Court judge issued a preliminary injunction preventing the city from seizing homeless people's property unless it was abandoned, contraband, evidence of a crime or an immediate threat to public health or safety, and from destroying it unless it posed a threat. The City appealed that injunction, arguing basically that homeless people simply did not have the constitutional right to property.

In a 2-1 ruling in early September 2012, a panel of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit upheld the original injunction, rejecting the City's seemingly illogical argument that "the unattended property of homeless persons is uniquely beyond the reach of the Constitution."

This decision represented a significant court victory for Skid Row residents – and other poor and homeless people across the country – that has been long in coming. LA CAN member Sean Gregory stated, "It’s a good thing the Courts are in our favor on this particular matter. Now if we could get LAPD and the ‘red skirts’ to get on board we could all start focusing more on the housing issue."

Since the 1980s, local residents and organizers, members of the Hippie Kitchen/Catholic Worker, and civil rights attorneys such as Carol Sobel have been fighting to protect the personal property of homeless residents from the Los Angeles Police Department, City "clean-up crews", and their agents at the Central City East Association. The straw that eventually broke the camel’s back was in early 2011 when Senior Lead Officer Dean Joseph confiscated and destroyed the personal property of homeless residents who were living out of EDARs ("Everybody Deserves a Roof" mobile tents that had been distributed to residents by former Mayor Richard Riordan). After Officer Joseph told four residents to move their EDARs to Winston Street from San Julian Street, the City almost immediately launched the “clean up crew” to Winston Street and seized and destroyed their EDARs and everything in them – scooped up, smashed and thrown in a dump truck in a matter of minutes.

(Continued on page 6)
HOUSING WATCH
WRITTEN BY STEVE DIAZ AND THELMY PÉREZ
Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO/Rent Control)
As reported many times, LA CAN is a member of the LA Human Right to Housing Collective. The Collective has a Citywide subcommittee focused on issues related to reforming and expanding rent control protections for tenants living in the over 600,000 units currently covered by the RSO, including the removal of the guaranteed annual 3% minimum rent increase. The Committee also engages in joint actions to bring attention to the Human Right to Housing including education/outreach days and banner drops in neighborhoods across the City to heighten the awareness of our tenant rights. The RSO Committee has been working diligently to OPPOSE the proposed Community Care Facilities Ordinance (CCFO), which would put an estimated 60,000 Angelinos at risk of homelessness by challenging the legality of “shared housing” arrangements. Many types of affordable housing in Downtown and South Los Angeles would be targeted, and potentially eliminated, under this ordinance. The RSO Committee is also supporting a new resident committee in the Rampart area which is currently focused on reclaiming the old Rampart Police Station and ensuring that this space serves the community’s interests.

New Genesis
Skid Row Housing Trust is preparing to open its newest development, the New Genesis Apartments, in October. Designed by Killefer Flaming Architects, the New Genesis Apartments replaces the 30 original SRO units of the Genesis Hotel with homes for 79 individuals experiencing homelessness and 26 apartments for other low-income residents. Services offered on-site include medical care by Los Angeles Christian Health Centers, mental health services by Exodus Recovery and case management. Due to the overwhelming need and demand for affordable housing in our community, the application list for this building is currently closed.

VICTORIES FOR HOUSING AUTHORITY TENANTS!
HOUSING COLLECTIVE MAKING PROGRESS!
Guest Fees
On September 27, the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) voted to change its Section 8 policy to prohibit the practice of guest fees for all Section 8 tenants throughout the City. The policy change was included in the final draft of the Section 8 Administrative Plan, which sets policy for the entire program. Although the original draft plan actually included language that ALLOWED guest fees, LA CAN members gave public testimony, brought the issue to the Section 8 tenant advisory committee, wrote letters, and engaged in other organizing and advocacy efforts to highlight the changes needed. These efforts reversed the initial position and resulted in the policy change that tenants really needed.

This is one of the final steps in the multiple campaigns of LA CAN members over the past five years to end the unfair practice of charging tenants to simply have a guest or visitor. The Housing Authority policy now applies to the hundreds of three large downtown landlords ending their guest fee policies in 2012. Skid Row Housing Trust, SRO Housing Corporation, and Izeck Shomof, who owns the Hayward Hotel. None of this would have been possible without the work of hundreds of LA CAN members who took a stand by signing petitions, meeting with owners, and advocating to the Housing Authority. We are very close to eliminating this practice altogether, and we need people to continue getting involved to ensure the few remaining buildings in Downtown LA stop charging guest fees!

Public Housing
Also on September 27, as part of the same Housing Authority Board of Commissioners meeting mentioned above, the Commission voted to overturn the proposal to raise flat rent. This vote is a victory for tenants – ensuring that rents will not go up in 2013 as originally planned. This is the first time in several years that the Commission has overturned Housing Authority staff proposals in the Agency Plan, showing that tenants organized across the City can make a difference in planning and policy!

This win was initiated by the LA Human Right to Housing Collective’s Public Housing Housing Housing Committee, which includes public housing residents residing in seven different communities across the city. By organizing together, some of the victories that the Committee has had include: 1) exposing LAHACO's unfair practices including those of ex-CEO Rudy Montiel, leading to his replacement as well as the replacement of several Commissioners; 2) halting the privatization of LA's public housing through “disposition”; 3) fighting to eliminate or reduce unfair fees, including trash fees; 4) ensuring tenants received a permanent monthly rent reduction to compensate for trash fees; and 5) informing thousands of residents about their rights.

The Public Housing Committee will continue its work in the coming months to ensure there is NO expansion of the multi-million dollar Community Policing Initiative without a full evaluation of first year of the program, the right to grow and maintain personal gardens, and improved parking policies in all public housing communities.

To get involved in any of LA CAN and/or the LA Human Right to Housing Collective’s housing campaigns, contact Steve Diaz at (213) 228-0024 or steved@angeros.org.

LA VIVIENDA EN VELA
ESCRITO POR STEVE DIAZ Y THELMY PÉREZ (TRADUCIDO POR ESTHER ALEJANDRO)
Ordenanza de Estabilización de renta (Control de renta)
Tal como se ha reportado muchas veces, LA CAN es un miembro del Colectivo del Derecho Humano a la Vivienda, que ha sido un subcomité en todo lo largo de la ciudad enfoque en asuntos relacionados con la reforma y expansión de protecciones en el control de renta para los inquilinos viviendo en las más de 600,000 unidades cubiertas al corriente por la Ordenanza de Estabilización de Renta, incluyendo la eliminación del 3% mínimo de incremento anual de a la renta. El comité también se envuelve en acciones conjuntas para llamar la atención del derecho humano a la vivienda, incluyendo días de educación/ alcance y colocación de banderines en vecindarios a través de la ciudad para realizar la atención a nuestros derechos humanos.

El comité de OER (RSO) ha estado trabajando diligentemente para OPONERE la Ordenanza de Facilidades de Cuidado Comunitario (CCFO), lo que pondría un estimado de 60,000 Ángeles en riesgo de la falta de hogar al plantear el “pensamiento compartido”. Muchos tipos de vivienda vendedora en el centro y Sur de Los Ángeles estarían señalados, y potencialmente eliminados, bajo esta ordenanza. El Comité OER también está apoyando un nuevo comité de residentes en el área de Rampart el cual actualmente se está enfocando en reclamar la antigua estación de policía de Rampart y asegurándonos de que éste espacio sirva a los intereses de la comunidad.

Nuevo Génesis
El fideicomiso de la Vivienda de Skid Row (Skid Row Housing Trust) está preparándose para abrir su más reciente edificio, los apartamentos Nuevo Génesis, en octubre. Diseñados por los arquitectos Killefer Flaming, el Nuevo Génesis reemplazaría las 30 unidades originales de OER del Hotel Génesis con hogares para 79 individuos que experimentan el desamparo, y 26 unidades para otros residentes de bajos ingresos a través de la ciudad. Servicios ofrecidos en el lugar incluyen atención médica, la salud mental, la administración de caso por Exodus Recovery, y caso manejado. Debido a la abrumadora necesidad y petición de vivienda comprensiva, en nuestra comunidad, la lista de solicitud para este edificio está cerrada en la actualidad.

VICTORIAS PARA LOS INQUILINOS DE LA AUTORIDAD DE LA VIVIENDA!
EL COLECTIVO PROGRESANDO!
Cobros de Visitantes
El 27 de septiembre, la junta de comisionados de la Autoridad de la Vivienda de Los Ángeles votó por cambiar su política para permitir la práctica de cobros a todos los inquilinos de la Sección 8 a través de la ciudad. Los cambios en la póliza fueron incluidos en el borrador final del plan administrativo de la Sección 8, el cual sienta las pólizas para todo el programa. Aunque el primer borrador del plan actualmente incluía lenguaje que PERMITÍA los cobros a huéspedes, los miembros de LA CAN dieron testimonio público, trataron el asunto al comité de asesoramiento de la Sección 8, escribieron cartas, y se envolvieron en otros esfuerzos de organización para resolver los cambios necesarios. Esos esfuerzos dieron marcha atrás a la posición inicial y resultaron en el cambio de política que los inquilinos necesitaban en verdad.

Este es uno de los pasos finales en la campaña múltiple de varios de los miembros de LA CAN por los cinco años pasados, de poner fin a la práctica injusta de cobrar a los inquilinos simplemente por tener un huésped o visitante. La política de la Autoridad de la Vivienda la vivienda viene en los talones de la eliminación de la política del cobro de cuotas en el 2012 por ser excesivos. Los cambios en la póliza de la Autoridad de la Vivienda no estaban inicialmente incluidos en el borrador de la junta de comisionados de la Autoridad de la Vivienda. Estamos muy cerca de eliminar del todo esta práctica, y necesitamos gente que continue envolviéndose para asegurar que algunos edificios restantes en el centro de Los Ángeles cesen de cobrar cuotas a huéspedes.

Vivienda Pública
Además, también el 27 de septiembre, como parte de la misma junta de Comisionados de la Autoridad de la Vivienda mencionada arriba, la Comisión votó por revertir la propuesta para aumentar cuotas. Este voto es una victoria para los inquilinos - asegurando el que las rentas no aumenten en el 2013 como se planeó originalmente. Esta es la primera vez en varios años que la Comisión ha revertido las propuestas de la Autoridad de la Vivienda en el plan de la agencia, demostrando que los inquilinos organizados a través de la ciudad pueden hacer una diferencia en la planificación y pólizas!

Esta ganancia estuvo iniciada por el Comité de Vivienda Pública del Colectivo del Derecho Humano a la Vivienda, que incluye a residentes de vivienda pública que residen en siete comunidades diferentes a través de la ciudad... Al organizar en conjunto, algunas de las victorias que el comité ha ganado para todos los residentes incluyen: 1) exponer las prácticas injustas de la Autoridad de la Vivienda de Los Ángeles (HACLA), incluyendo las del Oficial Ejecutivo Corporativo (CEO) Rudy Montiel, llevando a su renuncia, y a la renuncia de varios comisionados; 2) detener la privatización de la vivienda pública en Los Ángeles a través de la “disposición”; 3) luchando por eliminar o reducir las cuotas injustas, incluyendo cuotas a la basura; 4) asegurándose de que los inquilinos recibieron reducción a la renta mensual para compensar por cuotas de basura, y 5) informar a miles de residentes acerca de sus derechos de inquilinos.

WRITTEN BY HAMID KAHN

As previously reported in the Community Connection, a broad coalition of civil rights groups, community organizations and others who are steadily building momentum in their fight to stop LAPD spying.

Special Order 1 is a policy directive that authorizes LAPD to gather unlimited amounts of data on Angelenos who engage in such non-criminal behavior like taking pictures, using video cameras, taking notes, using binoculars and many other innocent daily activities. Since 2008 LAPD has used Special Order 1, which was issued in January 2012 as a revised version of 2008’s Special Order 11, to file Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) and open secret files on thousands of LA residents. These reports are then made available to be shared with other local and federal law enforcement agencies across the country.

On September 25th, in addition to criminalizing innocent behavior resulting from SO 1, LAPD got extraordinary powers to infiltrate, plant informants and open secret files based on anonymous tips. These changes would allow LAPD to: (1) Use informants or engage in surveillance for up to 180 days in response to any anonymous tip or “information,” without reasonable suspicion of criminal activity; (2) Create “fictitious online personas” to “friend” and infiltrate electronic communication; (3) Create provisions for approved undercover agents to attend the meetings of non-target organizations.

As LAPD steps up its efforts to violate individual rights and spy on LA residents, we need to continue building our movement to stop them. To learn more about the campaign to stop Special Order 1, visit: http://stoplapdspying.org/

Know Your Rights: Can the Government Take Your Stuff?

WRITTEN BY JOHN RAPHLING, ATTORNEY AT LAW

In their efforts to clear poor people out of gentrifying neighborhoods, like Downtown L.A. and Venice, the City, through its police force and other agencies, has embarked on a campaign of taking the possessions of homeless people that the officers find out on the sidewalks and in parks. They have been taking these possessions even when the owner has stood there and told them not to do so. They have taken these possessions even when they include important papers, medicine, family photos, and other valuable items. They, agents of the City, have committed theft.

Thanks to the hard work of LA CAN’s Community Watch teams, who have witnessed and documented these thefts, and civil rights attorney Carol Sobel, who has petitioned the federal courts, we now have some legal protection for our property.

The Ninth Circuit, the court of appeal that oversees our federal district court, has said, decisively, “that the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments [of the United States Constitution] protect homeless persons from government seizure and summary destruction of their unabandoned, but momentarily unattended, personal property,” Lavan v. City of Los Angeles (D.C. No. 2:11-cv-02874).

The Lavan injunction tells the City that it may not take property unless it is a threat to the public health and safety or evidence of a crime. It also says that if the City takes property, it can’t simply destroy it without giving the owner ninety days to attempt to reclaim it. In other words, if you leave your stuff for a minute to go find a bathroom, the City, including LAPD, isn’t allowed to take it and to throw it away. If they do, they are violating the law, and the City can be held in contempt of the federal court.

If the City officers have a reasonable belief that the property is abandoned, or that it is dangerous or that it is “contraband,” then they can take it. It is important, then, that we keep our valuables in an orderly condition and that we label our stuff with our names and something to indicate that we are not abandoning it. If we have trash mixed in with our valuables, we need to get rid of the trash so that there is no confusion or excuse. We should do our best to have someone watch over our stuff to advise police that it is not abandoned.

If we see a violation by police or other City agencies, we must immediately advise LA CAN, so that we can try to enforce the federal court order. Understand that the City doesn’t always follow the court’s orders, and we have to be vigilant and watch them and report them. If we don’t stand up for our rights, we will lose them.

While the court’s order in the Lavan case forbids City officers from taking property, it does not directly address Los Angeles Municipal Code section 56.11. LAMC 56.11 makes it a crime to leave personal property on the sidewalk. LAPD is using this law to attack poor people. They are not arresting the yuppies who leave their bikes out in front of the coffee shop when they go in for a latte or suburban school children who set down their book bags to go play, even though those actions violate LAMC 56.11. They are arresting poor and homeless people who have no place to store their only possessions and who have no choice but to keep their stuff on the sidewalk. Arresting and prosecuting.

While the Lavan order does not strike down LAMC 56.11, its logic does call the law into question. If homeless people have a right to have and keep personal property, how can it be a crime to have that property on the sidewalk when we have no other place to put it? The City stands by its law and by its oppressive and selective use of the law. We will continue to stand up to the City in the courts and on the streets.

Disclaimer: This column provides a very general and incomplete explanation of basic legal principles, and may not apply to the specific facts of your case. Please consult an attorney concerning your particular situation. This discussion applies only to California law. Other states may have different rules.
To Your Health: The Hypothalamus

WRITTEN BY CARMEN VEGA

Did you know that the Hypothalamus, the gland also known as the pineal gland, was once thought to be useless? Back in the day doctors didn’t fully know its function and similar to the way they think about the thyroid gland, they concluded that it didn’t have much use.

It was accepted that you could just remove these ‘things’ and everything would still be ok. As with the thyroid, a simple hormone replacement pill would help you go on living. And with the thyroid, it is true, you could live…Ok. Goodness be that the Hypothalamus is ed! (Phew!)

Now, we know that basically the Hypothalamus is the major gland that controls the pituitary gland, which in turn regulates the rest of the endocrine system. That once thought to be useless little gland, in fact, links the nervous system with the endocrine system, which controls metabolism, body temperature, hunger, thirst, sleep, etc! Interestingly the hypothalamus is regulated or nourished by light. At least 15 minutes in the great outdoors is the minimum requirement for a healthy functioning of the Hypothalamus. Its window is through our eyes. That’s unobstructed sunlight - not through glass, or the windshield of our cars, or through our glasses; just daylight, and of course, don’t look into the sun (which is painfully blinding).

So, you have, yet, another really good reason to go for a stroll and de-stress, catch some rays, in moderation. It is essential.
Up on the Roof: LA CAN Gardeners Start Fall Planting

WRITTEN BY DEBORAH BURTON

As regularly reported by the Community Connection, up on the roof of the Los Angeles Community Action Network building community residents have been growing and expanding a garden. The summer harvest recently came to an end, which provided an abundance of fresh vegetables, including a variety of tomatoes, green onions, cumber, bell peppers, carrots, radish, basil and rosemary.

You may ask yourself, “Who are the Skid Row Gardeners?” Well, a Skid Row gardener is anyone who understands the importance (and fun) of growing and eating healthy and nutritional food. But the garden was not started just to provide space for growing our own vegetables. It was also started to educate each other on how to start and maintain a garden. Since we’ve begun, we have learned about and educated each other on soil preparation, seed selection based off of seasons of the year, and proper watering techniques. We also know that gardening is therapeutic. It provides a space for those of us who live in a stressful society to work with our hands and appreciate being outdoors.

Now that fall has arrived, we have been working on our fall planting. We have recently planted carrots, beets, radish, turnips, chard, cilantro, bok-choi, collards, and much more.

However, while we focus a lot on gardening, LA CAN’s “Team Food” is also involved in supporting public policy changes that fight hunger in our communities. This year we worked hard to pass Assembly Bill 828, which would lift the lifetime ban on food stamps for those who have convictions of non-violent drug offenses. Unfortunately, the bill did not pass. However, we are already developing plans on how we can successfully pass this legislation in next year’s legislative session - since we know access to food stamps is vital to countless residents in our community.

We are also supporting Proposition 37 on this November’s ballot. Proposition 37 would require labeling of foods that have been genetically modified, which can result in many negative health outcomes, including cancer. So whether it be by sharing the fresh produce we grow on our roof or through fighting for policies that increase access to food, we are working hard to end hunger and increase healthy food access in our communities and country.

Please join our fight! If you are a gardener or an advocate who would like to create change, or would like to become one, please join the LA CAN’s Team Food meetings at 530 South Main Street every first and third Thursday of the month at 10:30 am.

The Voice, the Pulse, of our Village

LA CAN Rooftop Gardeners prepping for the fall planting.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

Church Groups Release Report Critical of Those Who Feed on the Streets

WRITTEN BY STEVE DIAZ

In late August a group of clergy from various downtown churches and faith-based service providers called the Downtown Clergy Council released a position paper entitled, “How to Make the Influence of the Service Community Stronger than the Influence of the Streets!” The report represented the coalition’s view on the free food distribution on the streets of Skid Row through comparing and highlighting the work of four local missions to the work of non-mission-related groups who provide free food giveaways and distribution on the street. It also makes the unsubstantiated claim that there no one is hungry in Skid Row, and does not include the issue of food insecurity, which refers to not having the means to access enough food for an active, healthy life.

The Downtown Clergy Council includes well-known so-called Christian individuals such as Andy Bales, CEO of the Union Rescue Mission, which is currently charging people more than $200 a month for a cot in a shelter. It also includes less well-known individuals, including Pastor Kevin Haah, who stated at a community meeting hosted by OGs in Service the day after the report was released that they have been misled or misinformed in some of their assertions. Pastor Haah was the only representative of the Downtown Clergy Council who attended the event and heard the feedback from residents and other stakeholders.

In the position paper, the council makes many questionable assertions - stating that no person on Skid Row is suffering from hunger, and stating that distribution of hygiene kits is a better idea than distributing food. It seems quite interesting that a group of religious leaders would publicly release a document that only focuses on promoting the food services of the four local missions without looking at other issues that affect food security like access to housing/shelter, green/garden space, storage facilities, and kitchen space. These leaders actively discourage other faith-based groups from distributing free food and raise the issue of whether free food distribution should actually be criminalized. This is surprising considering this passage from the bible: “I want you to share your bread with the hungry, open your homes to the homeless and poor, remove the yoke of injustice and let the oppressed go free.” (The Book of Isaiah)

Poverty, hunger and food insecurity are interrelated issues that must be analyzed and addressed comprehensively, given the disproportionate impacts of each in the Skid Row community. Highlighting the crucial work of the four missions to provide emergency food resources to those most in need is important, but it doesn’t need to come at the expense of other crucial food service providers. For example, it’s important to note that organizations like Food Not Bombs, which serves food regularly on San Julian Street, has completed all the necessary food preparation classes and obtained certification from the Country Department of Health. Food Not Bombs also cleans up all of the garbage after their food serving and uses environmentally-friendly, compostable materials to serve their food. The same goes for the Catholic Worker, who has been feeding residents of Skid Row for over 40 years both inside the Hippie Kitchen and on the streets, without creating trash or health concerns.

“A long line at a mission for food isn’t just an inconvenient waiting time,” said Frank Tambero, of Hunger Action Los Angeles. “It can force people to choose between eating and many other tasks for the day including securing shelter, medical appointments, or maintaining public benefits. Many people want and need the option of another food source with a smaller line - away from the crowds and potentially stressful interactions.”

In closing, the report does not account for the realities of life. The council’s report demeanes Skid Row residents and makes several misleading generalizations about people’s behavior and/or the actual causes of homelessness. This is not acceptable and counterproductive to community solutions for the most poor. People do not choose to become homeless, they are forced into homelessness due to social and economic reasons. The Downtown Clergy Council needs to step back and better research to root causes of hunger and homelessness.

Lastly, just because there are four local missions that serve 8,000 meals daily, as claimed in the report, does not mean that the needs of a community of 15,000 extremely low-income people (or 45,000 meals per day) are met through those services. Street food distribution helps meet the basic human need for food in our community.
LA CAN’s Community Watch team, which is comprised of trained residents who monitor police activity and prevent civil rights violations, responded to this egregious destruction of people’s homes and lives and began doing further outreach to document the coordinated efforts of LAPD and the City’s street services workers. Eventually eight residents, represented by Carol Sobel, agreed to join LA CAN and be plaintiffs in the lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the City’s practices. A temporary restraining order against the City was first issued by Judge Philip Gutierrez in April 2011, followed by the preliminary injunction in June that ordered the City and its agents to stop: 1) seizing property absent an objectively reasonable belief that it is abandoned, presents an immediate threat to public health or safety, or is evidence of a crime; or contraband; and 2) absent an immediate threat to public health or safety, destruction of said seized property without maintaining it in a secure location for a period of no less than 90 days.

We had won!!! But hold it - don’t celebrate yet, because when poor folks get a victory, the City often responds with more criminalization. Instead of honoring the preliminary injunction, continuing to clean the streets without violating people’s property rights, and focusing police work on serious crime, the City appealed the court’s decision and almost entirely stopped cleaning Skid Row streets. The City’s efforts to appeal did not sit well with many residents, including a homeless resident named James, who said, “Can’t nobody in City Hall tell me they love me and respect me and then go and throw me out of my home?” The City had me so much appealed they to the 9th circuit court just so they can take my only possessions.”

Following the appeal filing, the City, LAPD and their supporters at the Central City East Association launched a media blitz that blamed the injunction for the trash and public health problems in Skid Row, when in reality the City created a public health and public safety threat by using it as a weapon to clear up trash or engage in street cleaning which could have been easily done under the injunction’s parameters. The media portrayal also completely ignored the fact that the majority of homeless residents were sleeping soundly at 6:00 am each day, as LAPD rolls through the neighborhood waking up people on their loud-speakers. While there were some public health issues due to the City abandoning its street cleaning duties, the lack of maintenance was new to the state of being completely overrun by property and trash that the City and LAPD continued to portray.

Following the media blitz focused on the incredibly exaggerated description of public health issues, the City requested LA County Department of Public Health to assess public health problems in Skid Row. Instead of retaining residents on the injunction for public health issues as the City had done, the County’s report identified actions for the City to correct public health issues that mirrored exactly what residents had been asking for over the years. These included regular street cleaning, sufficient trash cans, 24/7 public restrooms with soap and other needed supplies, and vermin control efforts.

The City did engage in street cleaning efforts following the County’s report and, while certainly the media circus and haz-mat suits were unnecessary, the street cleaning itself was much needed and generally respected residents’ rights throughout the process. However, there were also contradictions between the efforts of the street cleaners, led by Fire Department Chief Butler, and the City’s street cleaners, who told residents they could not return to certain streets and engaged in other criminalization efforts to remove certain encampments. LA CAN members and locals, members of the cocina Hippie/Trabajadores Católicos, and abogados de derechos civiles, tales como Carol Sobel, han estado luchando para proteger y garantizar a los residentes desamparados de la ciudad sus altavoces. A través del vecindario despertando a la gente con la amenaza de que la gran mayoría de los residentes no merecen un techo”, tiendas de campaña y su apoyo a los residentes desamparados en TMUT a la calle Winston de la calle San Julian, la ciudad casi inmediatamente lanzo la “cuadrilla de limpieza” a la calle Winston y continuo destruyendo sus TMTA y todo dentro de ellas - recogiendo, quemando y tirando en un camino de desperdicios en cosa de minutos.

El comité de vigilancia de LA CAN, que se compone de residentes entrevistados quienes velan la actividad policíaca y previenen la violación a los derechos de los residentes desamparados en la ciudad, de que “la propiedad desatendida de los desamparados se ubicada mas allá del alcance de la Constitución.”

Esta decisión representa una victoria significativa de la corte para los residentes de Skid Row - y otras gentes pobres y desamparadas a través del país - que de largo hacia falta. Sean Gregory, residente del vecindario de la calle, dijo, “Algo bueno que las cortes estén a favor nuestro en este asunto en particular. Ahora, si pudieramos deshacemos de LAPD y las ‘camisas rojas’ a bordo, podríamos todos enfocarnos en el asunto de la vivienda. Desde el 1980, la LAPD y organizadas el Community Watch teams are still working to resolve these issues. Yet, despite the City’s resources being used for legal actions, the next and other efforts to blame the injunction for public health problems that can be easily solved within the parameters of the court ruling, the City did not win their appeal. Their ongoing arguments and policies that attempt to blame the property of homeless individuals or their rights simply did not hold up in federal court. In fact, the court’s ruling stated, “This appeal does not concern the power of the federal courts to constrain municipal governments from addressing the deep and pressing problem of mass homelessness or to otherwise fulfill their obligations to maintain public health and safety. In fact, this court would urge Los Angeles to do more to resolve that problem and to fulfill its obligations. Nor does this appeal concern any purported right to use public sidewalks as personal storage facilities. The City has instead asked us to declare that the unattended property of homeless persons is uniquely beyond the reach of the Constitution, so that the government may seize and destroy with impunity the worldy possessions of a vulnerable group in our society. Because even the most basic reading of our Constitution, there is simply no such a result, the City’s appeal is DENIED.”

LA CAN will continue to work to ensure people’s property rights are respected, not only on sidewalks and streets but sidewalks and sidewalks are clean and safe. They City can no longer rob us for our property, but we have to learn our rights and exercise them together to be sure the law is upheld and our community gets the same services as all others. LA CAN also has materials, including signs making clear your property is not abandoned, that you can use to protect your property. For more information on your civil and human rights include attending LA CAN’s Know Your Rights trainings every Wednesday at 3 pm.
In early September, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a decision that bans the City of Los Angeles and LAPD from seizing and destroying the private property of Skid Row residents. To help spread the word and share news of the victory, LA CAN created “Private Property Not Abandoned” signs that residents can use to signal BID officers, trash collectors, and LAPD that their property is NOT abandoned. Those interested in obtaining a sign should contact LA CAN.

Why is this sign important and why would you use it? When would you use it and how?

Denise

“It’s important because it means this is my property. It’s everything I own. These items are important to me. My basket is my home. You don’t go in someone’s home and take their property so don’t take mine.”

TC

“This sign means ‘freedom.’ Now I can go to the bathroom without fear of the red shirts or LAPD taking my property.”

Pinky

“This means they can no longer come around and harass me, take my property and leave a sign saying we got your stuff come get it. You can’t take my property anymore.”

New York

“When you’re homeless you don’t have much stuff. So it all means a lot. You don’t want nobody taking your stuff. This sign will me protect the few possessions I do have from being destroyed.”

ARRIBA A LA IZQUIERDA: Un anuncio elaborado por LA CAN y distribuido a los residentes de Skid Row, quienes han estado colocando los anuncios laminados en sus carritos para señalarles a los oficiales BID, a los recolectores de basura, y a LAPD que su propiedad no está abandonada. Los interesados en obtener uno de estos anuncios deben contactar LA CAN.

ARRIBA A LA DERECHA: El 17 de Septiembre, los miembros de la Cocina Hippie (Hippie Kitchen) / los Trabajadores Católicos (Catholic Workers) y LA CAN, así como otros residentes de la comunidad, se manifestaron delante de la Cocina Hippie en la calle Gladys para una marcha de carritos y desfile de victoria para celebrar nuestra victoria en la corte del noveno circuito. La Cocina Hippie, que ha regalado miles de carritos de compras a los residentes sin hogar para proteger su propiedad durante los últimos años, compró 100 carritos nuevos para repararlos en los escalones en la puerta de la comisaría. Jeff Dietrich de los Trabajadores Católicos puso en marcha la manifestación con un discurso conmovedor y luego, decenas de personas marcharon los 100 carritos por el barrio, mientras que el sistema de sonido explotó con la canción “Got to Give to the People What They Want (Hay que Darle al Pueblo lo que Quieren).” La marcha terminó en la División Central, donde el frente de la estación se lleno de carritos y los policías salieron corriendo de la estación tratando de mover a la gente fuera de la propiedad pública frente a la estación. El grupo reunió, cantó, bailó y expresó que los 30 años de robos por parte de Policía de Los Ángeles hoy llega a su fin.
Fight Against Cuts in Bus Services and Fare Increases: Vote NO on Measure J

WRITTEN BY JOSE VANDERBurg

Over the past few years and accelerating in the last couple months, there has been a reduction of bus service. The city’s transit system is vital for the thousands of mostly extremely low-income Angelenos who depend on it to get to work, appointments, special events, and other locations. Yet Metro has been cutting bus service and increasing fares, even as its income grows through sales tax set-asides.

What we have seen and experienced is the prioritization of building out Metro’s rail system at the expense of bus riders, primarily impacting low-income communities of color. While many loyal bus riders pay their fare and show up on time for their buses, they have been betrayed by Metro leadership.

However, this November, frustrated transit riders will have a chance to make a statement and voice their opinion on cuts in bus services and unfair treatment of bus riders by voting NO on Measure J.

Who Said Voting Don’t Matter?

WRITTEN BY PETER WHITE

How many times have you heard people say that voting does not matter? Is it a generational thing, with people coming up from the civil rights movement in strong support of voting and other generations asserting it doesn’t matter?

Could it be that the civil rights generation is all too familiar with those beatings, literacy tests, poll taxes, lynchings and many other acts of violence aimed at squashing their rights and voices and are not willing to go backwards?

Could it be that Black Power Movement demands were purposely misconstrued, as it relates to the power of voting, and that campaign of mis-information has been passed on through successive generations?

Or, is it simply because many communities just don’t regularly see, feel, touch, and experience the benefits of casting their ballots? As with most things there is no simple answer but if we look close enough the truth is usually hiding in plain sight—the truth about the importance of voting, that is.

For all you voting nay-sayers, I implore you to look around at the all-out assault on potential minority voters’ right to cast their ballots. More than 20 states around the nation have proposed legislation that would change the rules regarding various forms of acceptable identification that must be presented in order to vote, which would disproportionately disenfranchise low-income communities of color. Unfortunately, California is amongst the list committing these changes despite the fact that many would consider this a “liberal” state. Eleven states have successfully changed their identification requirements, but many are undergoing legal challenges and some have already been eliminated for the November election cycle.

The question you should be asking is WHY are all of these “voter ID” efforts happening?

Trupania Bonner, from Moving Forward Gulf Coast located in Slidell, LA, is very clear on the answers to this question, stating, “We have everything to lose...this is not your typical voting cycle.” Bonner goes on to insist that, “These efforts mean one thing - turning this country back to its pre-1865 standards. So much for the post-racial rhetoric!”

The architects of this new millennium poll tax point to voter fraud as their impetus; however, studies show that voter fraud (impersonation at the polls) is virtually non-existent. The timing of these attempts are suspect as well as our nation approaches another historic election cycle. The desired outcome is not much of a mystery as we continue to witness a push towards developing a system that benefits the top 1% at the expense of the 99%, especially those at the very bottom.

It is our lived, everyday experience that disenfranchising communities of color is likely to mean the escalation of many disturbing trends of the past couple of decades: dismantling of safety nets; a fend for yourself doctrine that reinforces a “dog eat dog” mentality; rapid expansion of prison construction (which will also benefit the 1% and their stocks); elimination of senior programs and health coverage; and the list goes on and on.

I know many will probably say that is the lived experience right now, but I urge you to recognize it can and will get worse if voter ID laws remove certain people’s right to vote or if those of us with the right to vote don’t exercise it.

Bonner and others working on this issue across the country believe that, if left unattended, the current efforts will lead to political re-segregation and proactively affirming and establishing White male supremacy. But he also recognizes that this effort brings an opportunity to unify the country across race and class to demand and affirm that all of us are impacted by disenfranchisement efforts and we cannot let them continue.

For African American/Black people his message is clear, “There is an inherent need for the descendants of African slaves to fight back!” So the only question that remains is, what will you do?
A Toolkit For Building Power

WRAP has created a Without Housing Organizations’ Toolkit and we offer it here to any community based organizing effort, be it Rural or Urban. We offer it in order to preserve and build on what we already know to be fact and we will add to it as we move forward in the work we are doing.

In 2006, WRAP published a Without Housing report that clearly showed the world why America’s “approach” to ending homelessness has been overwhelmingly ineffective. In 2010, we updated the report, now available in both English and Spanish. To date, tens of thousands of copies have been downloaded.

Clearly, this message resonated with groups across the country and in 2010, we updated and expanded the analysis. At its core, homelessness is a visible manifestation of racism, classism, criminalization of poverty and commodification of the basic necessities which people need to survive. We identify the extreme policy shifts both legislatively and through funding that address education, healthcare, housing, immigrant rights and income support. They all connect with each other.

We will continue to do the research, conduct outreach to the community, analyze data, document our facts. Now we need to work with and teach each other in order to truly change the horrible direction that our country is rapidly heading down.

We know the history, we documented it, we fact checked it, we lived it. Now, we will be teaching it. The Toolkit puts into one place in a way accessible to everyone, the indisputable facts that have gotten us to where we are today. With a core focus on our communities’ housing and civil rights issues, it includes fact sheets on housing and criminalization, funding trends on affordable housing (both rural and urban), a historical timeline of mass homelessness in the US going back to 1929, and a fact-based analysis on how these housing and criminalization issues impact all segments of our society.

The Toolkit has A LOT of information broken out into different sections. This way people can go to the section that is going to be most helpful to them without having to go through the whole booklet whenever they need something. All the information will get “live time” updated on the website as policies or funding changes: thus ensuring the Toolkit stays relevant on an ongoing basis.

It includes a PowerPoint presentation unlike any one you’re likely to run across. It uses hard-hitting factual bullets to pierce the wall of racism and classism that so dominates public policy on poverty issues in America. Once again, it shows the power of having committed artists to translate our information into images that impact people at their heart as well as their brain to drive our message home.

Use the PowerPoint presentation in public forums at every opportunity. WRAP staff will assist you to add local slides that will connect the federal to your local community. Use the artwork (all of WRAP’s artwork projects a message) which resonates throughout the Toolkit. The Toolkit is focused broadly enough on the federal government so that any group in the country can use it to do inclusive social-justice community organizing. It is designed as a tool with which we can educate ourselves as we continue the struggle for our right to exist in dignity.

Our members created this Toolkit because we know it is time to connect our individual community-based organizing efforts, whether they be rural or urban. They are real and by connecting them to each other, we build power. Once we all know the facts, once we have the ammunition of truth, whether it be through a HUD spreadsheet or street outreach, we have an inherent responsibility to each one teach one and spread that truth far and wide.

On our website, we offer you the work we have done over seven years and we hope you will use it as a training and organizing tool. It validates that all of us can be our own teachers, experts, and educators.

The Toolkit and all of the referenced materials above can be found at www.wraphome.org.

 té de la página 6

El Circuito 9 de Apelaciones
declaro y la comunidad ganó
(otra vez)

Siguiendo al “relámpago” increíblemente exagerado describiendo los asuntos de salud pública de los medios, la ciudad pidió al Departamento de Salud del condado de Los Ángeles certificar los problemas de salud en Skid Row. En vez de culpar a los residentes o el interdicto por los problemas de salud como la ciudad lo había hecho, el reporte del condado identificó acciones correctivas para que la ciudad corrija los problemas de salud que exactamente reflejaban lo que los resi-

dentes habían estado pidiendo por más de varios años. Estas acciones incluyeron limpieza regular de las calles, suficientes botes de basura, más baños públicos 24/7, con jabón y otros suministros necesarios, y esfuerzos de control para las bandas.

La ciudad se dió a limpiar las calles siguiendo el reporte del condado y, mientras el circo de los medios y los “haz-mat” eran innecesarios, la limpieza de las calles era muy necesaria y en general respetó los derechos de los residentes a través del proceso. Sin embargo, también hubo contradicciones entre los esfuerzos de los empleados de limpieza, conducidos por subjefe Butler del Departamento de Bomberos, y LAPD, quienes dijeron a los residentes que no podían regresar a ciertas calles y se dieron a otros esfuerzos de criminalización para remover algunos campamentos.

Miembros de LA CAN y los equipos de Community Watch todavía trabajan para resolver esos asuntos.

Sin embargo, a pesar de que los recursos de la ciudad han estado utilizándose en acciones legales, el “relámpago” de los medios y otros esfuerzos para culpar al interdicto por los problemas de salud pública que fácilmente pueden ser resueltos dentro de los parámetros del dictámen de la corte, la ciudad no ganó su apelación. Sus continuos argumentos y políticas que intentan ar-

rancarle a los desamparados sus derechos sencillamente no ganó en la corte federal.

De hecho, la decisión de la corte dicta: “Esta apelación no concierne a los poderes de la corte federal de constreñir a gobiernos mun-
icipales el dirigirse a los problemas profun-
dos y urgentes del desamparo masivo o de

otro modo cumplir con sus obligaciones de mantener la salud y seguridad. De hecho, esta corte urge a Los Angeles a hacer más para resolver el problema y para cumplir esa obligación. Tampoco esta apelación concierne a un aparente derecho de usar aceras públicas como lugares personales de almacenamiento. En vez de ello, la ciudad nos ha pedido que declaramos que la propiedad personal desatendida de los desamparados está extraordinariamente fuera del alcance de la Constitución, para que así el gobierno pueda confiscar y destruir con impunidad las posesiones terrenales de un grupo vulnerable en nuestra sociedad. Ya que aún la lectura más básica de la Constitución pro-
híbe tal resultado, la apelación de la ciudad queda DENEGADA.”

LA CAN continuará trabajando para ase-
gurar que la propiedad de la gente está protegida Y que nuestras calles y aceras estén limpias y a salvo. La ciudad ya no podrá robar nuestras propiedades, pero tenemos que aprender nuestros derechos y ejercitarlos juntos para estar seguros de que se cumpla la ley y nuestra comunidad tenga los mismos servicios que todas las otras. LA CAN también tiene materiales, incluyendo rótulos haciendo claro que su propiedad no está abandonada, que puede usar para proteger su propiedad.

Para más información sobre sus derechos ci-
viles y humanos, incluyendo como proteger su propiedad, asista a los entrenamientos de Conozca sus Derechos de LA CAN todos los miércoles a las 3 p.m.
Films for the People: **PRIDE**

**WRITTEN BY ESTHER ALEJANDRO**

Starring: Terrence Howard, Bernie Mac and Kimberly Elise

It’s 1964, and Jim Ellis (Terrence Howard) is informed by his trainer that the swim meet in which he is about to participate has been threatened with cancellation due to him being seen getting off the bus. When Jim turns around to leave, the trainer calls him, telling him “It’s always easier to ask for forgiveness than for permission.” That said, he asks Jim if he’s ready to swim.

Jim takes his position with the other swimmers ignoring the boooing of the attendees. In reaction to the negativity, he gets out of the pool only to find a police officer who informs him he has to get out. The unfairness of it angers him to the point of attacking the cop and getting arrested.

Ten years have gone by, and he is on his way to Philadelphia, going through employment ads in the newspaper while on the bus. He pays a visit to the Mainland Academy athletic center, where the director dismisses him saying he wouldn’t be able to communicate with the students. He finds himself at the employment center in a Philadelphia ghetto, where he finds out about employment through the Philadelphia Department of Recreation at the Marc Foster Recreation Center located in Nicetown. The site is earmarked for demolition and his task is to get rid of everything before the city closes in on it.

The man in charge of the place, Elston (Bernie Mac) is upset that the city did not inform him of the decision to close the place, and he has a particular attachment to the center having been its chief of maintenance since the center first opened. Ellis begins by checking things around the various areas finding all kinds of materials, including trophies, plaques, pictures and box after box of abandoned items. He sets himself up to stay at the center. Elston gets a visit from his sister where Elston gets confirmation of the closing of the center.

At this point, Ellis proceeds to scrub the pool area, getting it ready for swimming. The basketball ring gets taken down by a city employee over the players’ protests. But soon they find themselves in the pool shooting the ball around. Ellis gets taunted by some of the swimmers until a competition makes him the winner. The kids have been coming to swim every day, and soon there is an expressed interest in competing. The opportunity comes when they are to swim against Mainline’s swim team.

They are declared losers when in the course of the competition, one of the swimmers from Mainland kicks a Foster swimmer in the head, and on the way back, they get a dose of reality from Ellis, informing them that Foster Center is their “house,” but since they don’t seem to take it seriously, it will be closed down. The bottom line, Ellis says, “Go play LIFE without a hoop” as a reminder of the hoop removed. Next day they show for practice, wearing the gear they refused to wear their first meet. At that point, Ellis goes to City Hall to plead for an opportunity to keep the center open.

The team begins a strenuous set of exercises to get in form, to continue to develop their swimming skills. Foster gets sanctioned to hold a swim meet there. Yet the Mainline team decides not to swim there, so it forfeits. Racism is not easily eliminated. In the meantime the FRC team begins swimming at surrounding state competitions winning significant ribbons and trophies, TV coverage and the center being kept open. As a result of their work, they qualify for the National Swimming Championship at the University of Baltimore. However, before the grand day, the center gets trashed. In spite of it, Ellis prompts them to persevere, focus and give it their all. They will be competing against Mercer and Mainland. In a photo-finish manner, they win over the other two. Since then, participants of Ellis’ teams have won scholarships to universities and have been part of Olympic trials.

As Skid Row residents, we need to think as a team, fighting against the inequalities in the living conditions of the place. Just as Ellis went about straightening Marcus Foster Center, we need to do our part to “straighten up” the housing situation in the area. We will need to exercise strenuously and take these matters seriously.

LABOR DAY GALA BRINGS COMMUNITY TOGETHER

**WRITTEN BY JAMES PORTER**

On September 3, LA CAN hosted its 13th Annual Labor Day Gala right on Main Street, where residents from throughout Skid Row and Downtown and beyond had fun and celebrated the community labor that makes up LA CAN and other efforts to improve our communities.

As always, the event was also an opportunity for folks in the neighborhood to relax and let loose. Main Street was blocked off between 5th and 6th and LA CAN members organized chess and dominos tournaments, served food, and held “Apollo West” - a live show where local artists and performers showcased their talents.

“I attended the LA CAN Labor Day Festival and I was emotionally moved by the performances and good spirits that were had by all,” said Aazim Muhammed, who was in attendance. “It was a great day!”

Downtown resident Derek Fuller not only participated in many of the events, he also walked away champion of the chess tournament, “I found the experience refreshing,” said Foley. “I was able to play chess and recite two of my poems. The festival game me a sense of fulfillment.”

But the day was not only for fun and games. It was also a day to get the community more involved in the work of LA CAN - to sign up new members, invite residents to our committee meetings, and honor those who have joined the fight to defend and improve the civil, housing, and human rights of low-income residents of Los Angeles.

“I enjoyed myself for hours - rocking to music, visiting with the people of LA CAN, but I also learned about some important issues. It was a real enjoyable experience,” said John, another downtown resident in attendance.

We danced, mingled amongst each other, had fun, and educated each other on how to get more involved. And folks are already looking forward to next year’s Gala.

“I enjoyed myself with my people,” said LA CAN member Terry. “We were all as one and it really made me feel special - knowing we all had fun. I would like to do it again. We should always be so happy. All power to the people!”
Should “Nuisance” Laws Punish Innocent Tenants?

WRITTEN BY KARL SCOTT

Over the past few months, residents of the Travelers Hotel have been experiencing confusion and injustice due to loopholes that exist within Los Angeles’ Nuisance Abatement process, which was created to deal with nuisance properties. In June 2012, the City ordered the Travelers Hotel to close because of the owner’s alleged failure to comply with orders issued under the nuisance abatement ordinance, forcing dozens of tenants out of their homes.

A property can be considered a nuisance under the City’s ordinance based on a few factors, such as the number of police calls made near the property and illegal activity occurring on streets and sidewalks near the property. A property can be declared a nuisance without any resident actually participating in the alleged nuisance activities. This process puts tenants at risk due to the actions of others, such as the building owner, LAPD and other community stakeholders.

Anyone, regardless of their stake in the property, can submit complaints to the city’s Zoning Administrator to begin the nuisance abatement process. For example, the Travelers Hotel was first declared a nuisance in 1999 after United Coalition East Prevention Project (UCEPP) initiated the process. As a result of being declared a nuisance, numerous conditions were placed on the owner, including requirements to hire a full-time security guard, installing cameras in common areas, and limiting the amount of people who could stand in front of the property.

According to the City, the owner did not comply with the conditions placed on the property and the certificate of occupancy is now being revoked. Most residents who live there now have been tenants for less than 5 years, have had nothing to do with the purported nuisance activity over the past 13 years, and certainly didn’t control whether their landlord hired a security guard. Yet now they are being displaced under this ordinance.

The City’s Housing Department is responsible for the relocation of displaced tenants. According to the nuisance law, owners of the property are also required to pay relocation assistance to the tenants. However, if the owner is unwilling or does not do so, the Housing Department can step in and pay relocation directly and place a lien on the property to recover these funds. This could create a disincentive for new owners to purchase this building, therefore creating the risk that it stays vacant for a substantial period of time, thereby increasing the number of desperately needed housing in the Skid Row community.

Inner City Law Center and LA CAN have been working collaboratively to ensure that tenants are aware of and comply with the required relocation paperwork, and that all tenant rights are upheld in the process. During the initial outreach in the building, organizers learned that many tenants were confused about the process and/or had not received any notifications about nuisance hearings impacting their homes at all. While the nuisance ordinance requires that notification be sent to all tenants and property owners within a 500 foot radius, notices were not received by residents, perhaps a violation of the notice process or due to the landlord controlling all of the mail delivery.

The current situation at the Travelers Hotel raises questions about whether the nuisance abatement process was applied properly to the property, or whether there are other more effective means of addressing the same concerns without putting tenants at risk of displacement. Additionally, this closure raises concerns about the process of removing buildings needed within the current nuisance ordinance and other loopholes to be addressed. The building closure based primarily on alleged illegal activities happening outside of the property raises questions about who is responsible for illegal activity public places AND who and what can be declared a “nuisance” by anyone else.

Until all of the relocation and other process and policy issues are resolved, the City has a responsibility to delay the relocation and closure process for residential buildings under the nuisance abatement process. Additionally, the Skid Row community should re-evaluate the use of the nuisance ordinance based primarily on alleged illegal activities happening outside of the property, or if any other property going through the nuisance abatement process raises questions about who is responsible for illegal activity public places AND who and what can be declared a “nuisance” by anyone else.

If you are a resident of the Travelers Hotel or any other property going through the Nuisance Abatement process you can contact Karl at 213.228.0024 for more information and join LA CAN’s Housing Committee which meets every Monday at 11:00 am.

¿Deberían las leyes de perturbación castigar a inquilinos inocentes?

ESCRITO POR KARL SCOTT

TRADUCIDO POR ESTHER ALEJANDRO

Por los últimos meses, residentes del Hotel Travelers han sufrido la confusión e injusticia debido a que existen dentro del proceso de aminoramiento de perturbación de Los Ángeles, que fue creado para tratar con propiedades perturbadas. En junio del 2012, la ciudad ordenó al Hotel Travelers cerrar porque el dueño alegadamente falló en cumplir con las condiciones que existan bajo la ordenanza de perturbación, obligando a decenas de inquilinos fuera de sus hogares.

Una propiedad puede ser considerada perturbadora bajo la ordenanza de la ciudad basada en unos cuantos factores, tales como el número de llamadas a la policía hechas cerca de la propiedad y actividad ilegal que ocurre en las calles y aceras cerca de la propiedad. Una propiedad puede ser declarada perturbadora sin que ningún residente esté actualmente participando en las actividades perturbadoras. Este proceso pone a los inquilinos a riesgo debido a las acciones o inacciones de otros, tales como el dueño del edificio, LAPD y otros interesados en la comunidad.

Cualquiera, irrespectivamente de su interés en la propiedad, puede someter quejas al administrador de zona para comenzar el proceso de abatimiento. Por ejemplo, el hotel Travelers primero se declaró perturbador en 1999 después que el proyecto Coalición Unidad de Protección del Este (UCEPP) inició el proceso. Como resultado de haber sido declarado un perturbador, se impusieron n merosas condiciones al propietario, incluyendo requisitos de emplear a un guardia de seguridad a tiempo completo, instalación de cámaras en áreas comunes, y limitar la cantidad de personas que podían estar paradas frente a la propiedad.

De acuerdo con la ciudad, el dueño no cumplió con las condiciones impuestas a la propiedad y el certificado de ocupación ahora está siendo revocado. La mayor parte de los residentes ahora han residido allí menos de cinco años, nada han tenido que ver con la supuesta actividad de perturbación por los pasados trece años, y ciertamente no tuvieron ningún control en que el dueño empleara un guardia de seguridad. Sin embargo, ahora se les desplaza bajo esta ordenanza.

El Departamento de la Vivienda de Los Ángeles es responsable del proceso de reubicación de los inquilinos del Hotel Travelers. De acuerdo con la ley de perturbación, a los dueños de la propiedad se les requiere pagar asistencia de reubicación a los inquilinos. Sin embargo, si el dueño está indisposto, o no lo hace, el Departamento de la Vivienda puede acercarse y pagar la reubicación directamente y poner un embargo a la propiedad para recuperar sus fondos. Esto podría crear falta de incentivo para nuevos dueños de adquirir estas edificaciones, por lo que la ciudad ha pensado de que quede vacante por un periodo sustancial de tiempo y una pérdida desesperanzadora de vivienda desesperadamente necesaria en la comunidad de Skid Row.

El centro legal Inner City y LA CAN han estado trabajando en colaboración para asegurar que los inquilinos inocentes cumplan con las formas de reubicación requeridas, y que todos los derechos de los inquilinos sean asegurados en el proceso. Durante el alcance inicial en los edificios, los organizadores sospecharon que a muchos inquilinos se les había mal informado acerca del proceso y/o no habían recibido notificación acerca de las audiencias sobre las perturbaciones teniendo impacto alguno en sus hogares. Mientras la ordenanza de perturbación requiere que se envíe notificación a todos los inquilinos y dueños de propiedad de entre un radio de 500 pies, las notificaciones no fueron recibidas por los residentes, quizás una violación al proceso de notificación o debido a que el arrendador controla toda la entrega de correo.

La situación al corriente en el Hotel Travelers levanta preguntas acerca de si el proceso de abatimiento de perturbación deba usarse en propiedades residenciales, o si hay otras formas de abordar las mismas preocupaciones sin poner a los inquilinos a riesgo de desplazamiento. Adicionalmente, este cierre levanta preocupaciones acerca de algunas de las protecciones a los inquilinos, necesitadas durante este período de perturbación actual, y otras “escalatorias” a ser consideradas. El cierre del edificio basado en una violación a la ordenanza de perturbación no levanta preguntas acerca de quien es responsable de actividades ilegales, lugares públicos, y quién y qué puede ser declarado una perturbación por algún otro.

Hasta que todo lo de la reubicación y otros procesos y asuntos de conducta queden resueltos, la ciudad debe considerar de alguna manera la posibilidad de alzar la reubicación y el proceso de cierre de edificaciones residenciales bajo el proceso de abatimiento de perturbación. Adicionalmente, la comunidad de Skid Row debe reevaluar el uso de la ordenanza de perturbación que pude conducir al desplazamiento y pérdida de vivienda, y trabajar para mejorar la ordenanza para ampliar “escapatorias” al objeto de crear soluciones que sirvan a las necesidades de todos.

Si usted es residente del Hotel Travelers o de alguna otra propiedad encontrándose en medio del proceso de abatimiento de perturbación, póngase en contacto con Karl al (213) 228-0024 para más información, y únase al Comité de Vivienda de LA CAN.

¡The Voice, the Pulse, of Our Village! October - November 2012

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

THE TRAVELERS HOTEL
LA CAN Recommendations on November 2012
Propositions and Measures

In addition to the Presidential election, there are a number of important propositions and measures on the November 6 ballot that will impact Skid Row residents and other low-income communities. We encourage all registered voters to learn about the issues and exercise their right to vote. Here are the positions of LA CAN on a few of ballot issues:

NO on Proposition 32: Restricts political contributions from union members, but creates loopholes for many corporate donors.

YES on Proposition 34: Ends the death penalty in California. The death penalty has been found to be a violation of human rights by many international experts.

Find out more information about these and other ballot measures BEFORE you vote on November 6th! Your sample ballot has information and confirms your polling place. You can use the websites below, and there are many other places to get the information you need to cast an educated vote.

NO on Proposition 37: Consumers should have the right to know, through labeling requirements, if food has been genetically engineered.

YES on Proposition 36: Reforms California’s “Three-Strikes” policy so that fewer people with face 25 years to life sentences for a third strike.

YES on Proposition 37: A regressive sales tax increase that will allow MTA to continue and escalate policies that have resulted in civil rights violations against long-time bus riders and communities of color.

NO on Measure J: Reject a regressive sales tax increase that will allow MTA to continue and escalate policies that have resulted in civil rights violations against long-time bus riders and communities of color.

(Read more about Measure J on Page 8)

LA CAN is located at 530 S. Main St. and has internet access and voter education materials available.

Community Calendar

Oct 19
6pm Residential Organizing Meeting at LA CAN.

Oct 22
National Day of Protest Against Police Brutality! Meet at 2pm at the Hippie Kitchen on 6th and Gladys. More info about the event on page 3.

Oct 25
TAKE BACK THE NIGHT! Rally to raise awareness about violence against women 6pm at LA CAN. More info about the event on page 9.

Nov 1
Hunger Action Day! 11am West Steps of City Hall (Spring St. between 1st and Temple). More info on page 4.

Nov 2
6pm Residential Organizing Meeting at LA CAN

Nov 6
City, County and National Elections - Voting on Candidates and Important Ballot Measures

Nov 16
6pm Residential Organizing Meeting at LA CAN

Civil Rights Committee Meetings - Every Monday at 1pm at LA CAN

Housing Committee Meetings - Every Monday at 11am at LA CAN

Downtown Women’s Action Coalition Meetings - The Second Tuesday of every month at 3:30pm at LA CAN

Team Food and Garden Meetings - First and Third Thursday of every month at 10:30 am at LA CAN

October / November 2012 Community Connection Team

Esther Alejandro
Eric Ares
Deborah Burton
Becky Dennison
Steve Diaz
General Dogon
Walter Fears
Hamid Khan
Thelmy Perez
James Porter
John Raphling
Karl Scott
Lydia Trejo
Jose Vanderburg
Carmen Vega
Pete White

 Interested in writing or contributing to the Community Connection? Have a response to an article or piece you’d like to share? Know of a pressing community issue we should be covering? Contact us at 213.228.0024 or drop by the LA CAN offices, located at 530 S. Main St.

Editorial Policy:

The Community Connection is a street newspaper and a member of the North American Street Newspaper Association and the International Network of Street Papers. The Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN) is a membership organization comprised of low-income, homeless and formerly homeless residents living in Downtown and South Los Angeles, and surrounding communities. LA CAN’s staff and core members write many articles that appear in the Community Connection. These generally appear without a byline, attributed to LA CAN as a collective.

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530 S. Main Street, Ground Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90013
(213) 228-0024

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