



WVAHA *Collection*

A Publication of the West Virginia Association of Housing Agencies

Spring 2008

Tony Bazzie Receives Award



The director of a West Virginia housing authority has been named "Advocate of the Year" by the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO).

Tony Bazzie, Executive Director of the Raleigh County Housing Authority, was awarded the 2008 Mary K. Nenno Advocacy Award at the conclusion of NAHRO's 2008 Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. In naming Bazzie as the individual winner of the award, which is designed to "recognize outstanding and innovative achievement in the area of legislative advocacy," NAHRO presented him with a wood and glass-encased American flag certified to have flown over the U.S. Capitol and then properly folded by veterans who are members of NAHRO.

James Inglis, former NAHRO president and chairman of the organization's Legislative Network, made the announcement and the presentation on April 2. Inglis cited several of the activities undertaken by Bazzie over the years in the area of legislative advocacy, including serving on the SERC Legislative Committee for eight years (six years as chairman); his leadership in preparing legislative position papers for both SERC and the West Virginia Association of Housing Agencies; his service on the NAHRO Legislative Network; his creation of an advocacy

training program, which he has presented on both the state and regional levels to help others better understand the legislative process for bills and how to properly contact lawmakers; his letter-writing to members of Congress on behalf of the WVAHA; and his creation of a legislative network for the 10 SERC states.

In accepting the award, Bazzie remarked that he is "humbled" by the award, knowing how much so many others across the country have done in advocating for the housing programs administered by housing agencies.

Bazzie was nominated for the award by Huntington Housing Authority Executive Director Bill Dotson, who wrote in part, "Tony has been and continues to be a strong advocate for affordable housing and community development programs. His dissemination of information and the development of a method for effectively mobilizing hundreds of additional advocates, and his call to action to housing authorities throughout West Virginia and the entire 10-state SERC region, have been invaluable in the quest to effect positive changes in the affordable housing industry."

The NAHRO Advocacy Award was named in honor of Mary K. Nenno, a life-long housing advocate and NAHRO staff member from 1960 until retiring in 1991, who died in February 2007.

Also honored during the closing session was Rep. Barney Frank of Massachusetts, who was named NAHRO's Legislator of the Year to honor his long-standing commitment to providing decent, safe and affordable housing in quality communities for families in need.

** Pictured above from left: Saul Ramirez, Jr., Executive Director of NAHRO; Tony Bazzie; Renee Rooker, NAHRO President

President's Message:



In recent years the challenge to public housing agencies has been to deliver quality housing services to our communities in a very uncertain funding environment. While this issue certainly remains, new challenges are

emerging that promise to make our jobs more complex. The initiation of asset based management, the soon coming changes in PHAS and the apparent changes to the Voucher program through SEVRA. In addition, as our public housing inventory across the state ages, we have to find ways of revitalizing properties even as capital funds decrease. To address these concerns we can look to the low-income tax credit program or even converting vouchers to project base assistance. However, these programs are complicated and demanding on already stretched staff and resources. We hope through the training we're offering during the Spring Workshop we can bring clarity to these complex issues and assist you in leading your agency through the challenging days to come.

A Special Visitor



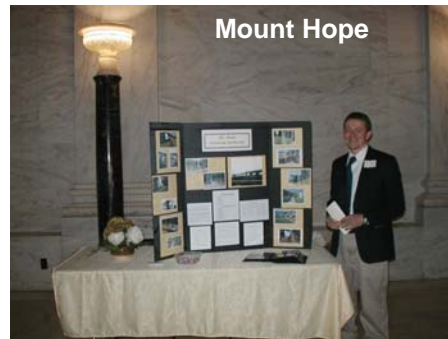
Pictured above are Residents of Hope House, a transitional housing project owned and operated by the Housing Authority of Mingo County. Betty Workman, pictured on the far right, works with these families to help address their needs to become self-sufficient. An Easter egg hunt was held on the grounds with Mr. Easter Bunny provided by Southside Mall operator Diana Hannah.

Housing Day at the Legislature



Various service providers participated in Housing Day at the WV State Legislature on Thursday, March 6, 2008. Housing Authorities and providers set up informational displays to educate legislators about the importance of these programs and the need for additional funding and support.

Pictured Above: Executive Directors from various housing authorities across the state pose in front of the West Virginia State Association of Housing Agencies display. From left are: John Marty's, Morgantown; Dennis Rogers, Grant County; Karen Jacobson, Randolph County; Bill Dotson, Huntington; Mark Taylor, Charleston; Nancy Martin, Mount Hope & Tony Bazzie, Raleigh County.



HHA Youth Experience Full Spectrum

HUNTINGTON — On top of an icy hill, on a blustery cold night, people were dancing.

It was warm inside the Huntington Museum of Art, where youth from the latest Artworks project performed a dance routine on stage, as a final part of a multi-week project devoted to learning about the arts.

In times past, the youth involved have worked on one project, typically a piece of display art, that ended up hanging in a library at Marshall University or in one of the city’s prominent buildings. This time was different.



The youth, all part of the Huntington Housing Authority’s Operation Right Choice program, spent time working on all types of art, from functional ceramics to paper to making T-shirts. And there was the aforementioned dance routine.

“Before, they worked on one project for seven weeks”, said Tim White, program coordinator for the Cabell County Youth Empowerment program. “This has given them so much variety.”

The youth made the plates they were eating off of at a special dinner Saturday night, after learning about

ceramics. They also helped make the food, taking a cooking course as part of the project.

The rest of the program entailed making paper for greeting cards — “we made it with pulp, not the kind in your orange juice, but the stuff that holds paper together”, said one of the kids — making designs for and producing T-shirts, and learning dance steps.

Fifteen youth participated in the program.



Mingo County Receives Federal Home Loan Bank Grant



By building units, owned and operated by the Housing Authority, families may be served who have burnt their bridges with social service agencies, community supporters, and families. By providing the necessary support services and being a liaison for these families, the Housing Authority and willing partners, will help families achieve independence and establish relationships within the community, which will help them achieve independence and be able to obtain and remain in permanent housing.

Housing Authority Executive Director Virginia Lewis, Federal Home Loan Bank, John R. Lewis, Tranquilla Whitt, First National Bank of Williamson, and Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito joined in celebration of a grant award of \$329,000 from Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburg for the development of Carewood, a homeless development being constructed by the Housing Authority of Mingo County.

This project will consist of purchasing land and building four, two-bedroom units in Mingo County, West Virginia for homeless families. The Housing Authority will be the owner/operator of the project with partners providing support services. First priority for these units will be disabled families served by Logan Mingo Mental Health Center, who is one of our partners. The project will be located in Delbarton, West Virginia in close proximity to the administration offices of the authority. Over 800 units of housing have been demolished within the past five years leaving a severe shortage of housing, especially rental housing. This project will permit the transfer of families from streets and other places not fit for human habitation. Partners will provide the support services necessary to allow families to become stable.

All In a Days Work



Is this in my job description?? The Administrative Assistant of the Point Pleasant Housing Authority, Cheryl Spencer was asking this question the day she had to capture a goat that was roaming free at their downtown project site. The goat was apprehended with no problem and turned over to the proper authorities. All in a days work at the Housing Authority.

Charleston Replacement Housing # 1 Open House & Ribbon Cutting



Members of the ribbon cutting ceremony at Patrick Street from left are: Rev. Lloyd Alan Hill, Rev. James Ealy, Mike Stajduhar, Mark Taylor, Scott Canel, Pete Minter, Marie Prezioso, Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito, Mayor Danny Jones, Joe Hatfield, Mike Comer & Alan McVey.

Charleston-Kanawha Housing hosted an Open House event beginning with a ceremony in the Orchard Manor Switzer Center on October 22, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. Immediately following the ceremony was a ribbon cutting ceremony & tour of the Homes of Patrick Street located at the corner of Patrick & West Washington Streets.

The opening ceremony featured displays from Charleston-Kanawha Housing staff for various programs including Public Housing, Section 8, Family Self Sufficiency, Safe & Drug Free Communities and Senior Services. The Honorable Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito was the featured speaker along with various other community partners including: The Honorable Danny Jones, Mayor, City of Charleston, WV; Mark Taylor, Executive Director; Reverend Lloyd Allan Hill; Katherine Dooley, Chair-Charleston-Kanawha Housing's Board of Commissioners; Pete Minter, West Virginia Field Office Director, Department of Housing & Urban Development; Joe Hatfield, West Virginia Housing Development Fund and Scott Canel, Alan Ives Construction.

Charleston Replacement Housing #1 is part of a redevelopment plan that will be implemented in five phases and will lead to the total revitalization of two of the oldest public housing communities in the state of West Virginia, Littlepage Terrace and Washington Manor.

Phase one was constructed on three separate sites. These communities are owned by Charleston Replacement Housing Limited Partnership # 1 and are public housing and tax credit units.

There are eight units located beside Jarrett Terrace at 824 Central Avenue. Two buildings consist of 4 two-bedroom units with 875 square feet, 2 three-bedroom units with 1,146 square feet (one of which is fully handicap accessible with 1,131 square feet), and 2 four-bedroom units with 1,427 square feet.

Sixteen units are located on previously undeveloped land in Orchard Manor, 900 Griffin Drive. Three buildings consist of 6 two-bedroom units with 875 square feet, 8 three-bedroom units with 1076 square feet and 2 four-bedroom units with 1427 square feet.

Twenty are located on Patrick Street, replacing a vacant deteriorating restaurant. Four buildings consist of 8 one-bedroom units with 682 square feet on the lower level apartments and 761 square feet on the upper level apartments. There are 4 two-bedroom units with 863 square feet, 6 three-bedroom units with 1076 square feet and 2 four-bedroom units with 1427 square feet.

All of these new homes are furnished with energy star appliances, dishwashers, central heat and air, carpeted bedrooms and are wheelchair accessible on the first level.

WVAHA Scholarship Committee S



TaBetha J. Harrah

Charleston-Kanawha Housing
Mark Taylor, Executive Director
\$1,000 Jennings Randolph Scholarship
Future Financial Analyst

“My objective for continuing my education reflects my desire to be a productive and self sufficient adult.” Ms. Harrah plans to attend West Virginia State University her first year, then enroll at Marshall University. Ms. Harrah has participated in the Optimism Club. She has also helped organize AdamFest for two years, a fundraiser for her older brother battling Hodgkin’s Lymphoma. “I want to make use of the knowledge, the compassion, and the drive that my family has instilled into me by attending and completing college.”



Chelsea McEwuen

Parkersburg Housing Authority
D.J. Morris, Executive Director
\$1,000 Serc-Nahro Scholarship
Future Teacher

“I have always wanted to go to college. College is my ticket to happiness and security. College is my only hope.” Chelsea has maintained a 3.7 GPA and enjoys participating in various community service projects through the Interact Club at Parkersburg South High School. Ms. McEwuen plans to attend Glenville State College and become a secondary school education teacher in the field of World Studies.



Kathryn Newlin

Keyser Housing Authority
Shelia Dyche, Executive Director
1,000 Serc-Nahro Scholarship
Future Teacher

Ms. Newlin will attend Shepherd University and plans to pursue a degree in Secondary Education with an emphasis in English. “I would love to be the person that opens their eyes to education through new and modern ways of learning. I feel I could make a great impact on the lives of students that I will meet in the future.” Ms. Newlin has been a member of the band throughout middle and high school. “Music has taught me to be creative and expressive in all aspects of my life.”

elects Scholarship Winners for 2008



Sarah Halbert

Parkersburg Housing Authority
D.J. Morris, Executive Director
\$1,000 Russell Bibbee Memorial Scholarship
Future Teacher

“Becoming a teacher has been my dream for many years.” Sarah plans on majoring in secondary education in English or history and would ultimately like to teach high school at her alma mater, Parkersburg South. Ms. Halbert enjoys reading, singing, and the sport of soccer, both playing and refereeing. She also enjoys volunteering with agencies that serve the disabled adults and children. “Being a teacher will allow me to channel my interests academically and socially to become a role model for the next generation.”



Kara Keeney

South Charleston Housing Authority
Sandra Winter-Nunley, Executive Director
\$1,000 Russell Bibbee Memorial Scholarship
Future Athletic Training

Ms. Keeney enjoys sports and hopes become an athletic trainer for a pro or college team. Kara plans to major in Athletic Training at the University of Charleston and continuing to receive her doctorate in Physical Therapy. She has played basketball and softball for Capital High School and has been recruited to be a part of the Crew Team for UC. Kara has been active in Raze, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Sports Movies clubs in addition to being involved in her church. She also finds time to work at Chick-Fil-A.



Karla Schartiger

Randolph County Housing Authority
Laura Rossmeyer Professional Development Scholarship - \$500

Ms. Schartiger has been employed 2+ years at the housing authority and is pursuing her life long dream to attend college.

Ongoing WVAHA Scholarship Updates

2005 - Cara Waybright

– Davis and Elkins writes, *First I would like to thank the scholarship committee again for choosing me to represent this prestigious scholarship, it is truly an honor. Next, I would like to let you in on a few things I am doing at Davis and*



Elkins College. I just recently finished my third season with the Lady Senators women's basketball team. I had a great year, and hated to see it end as the coach who recruited me will be retiring. Right now they are in the process of searching for a new coach, and I am very anxious to see who that might be. I am carrying 17 hours this semester and working very hard in my classes. Because I am a junior the classes are seemingly becoming more difficult, but I am doing fine. I will be busy in the off-season working on post season training and keeping my grades up. Thank you again for awarding me this great scholarship.

Jessica Dyche (WVU) has declared a double major in English and Russian. Jessica has competed in WVU writing contests and has had several poems published in the undergraduate literary journal, *Calliope*. She is a member of the WVU-FEM, Sierra Club, WVU Animal Welfare Organization, and Russian club. She also joined the WVU boxing club. In addition to these extracurricular activities she tutors at the WVU Writing Center.

Ian Newlin (Potomac State) An agricultural student participates in the Ag. and Forestry Club and was elected Northeast Region Vice-President of WV FFA Association. He writes, "Thanks for your continued support of my education and hope that you will continue to support the youth of West Virginia Housing for years to come!"

2006 - Molly Born

(Fairmont State University) Molly is currently studying abroad in Paris, France, and enrolled at a French university (St. Denis University, a school which specializes in the arts). She is studying among students from all over the world in



order to create an international collection of articles. She is also working as an English conversation tutor for Epitech, a technology-based school in the south of Paris. In her spare time (which is not a lot!) she likes to explore the city and watch French television.

2007 - Caity Battista (West Liberty) Caity says her first year has been enjoyable and constructive. As a nursing student she has been able to balance a tough academic schedule and still meet new friends and socialize a little. She participates in the honors program and joined Kappa Phi, a Christian and community service oriented club.

Sandra Idris (Marshall University) A freshman experienced the difference between high school and college and what it was like having an incompatible roommate. Sandra says she has made adjustments and enjoys her classes, especially psychology.

Brian Lee (WVU) Brian states, "My college experience as a freshman at WVU has been challenging and has proved to be a true lesson in life. Although it was hard at first, I have adjusted quite well to being away from home and on my own. I feel I have greatly matured during this past year." Brian is a vocal member of the Mountaineer Maniacs and participates in various athletic activities while remaining focused on his studies.

Kathryn (2006) and Donnie Kessell (2007) will graduate from West Virginia State University in August 2008.

The average GPA for our scholarship students is 3.5.

West Virginia Well Represented at NAHRO Legislative Conference

West Virginia's housing authorities want Congress to adequately fund the Public Housing Operating Fund, which will be short-funded by \$1 billion under the proposed 2009 budget, and to provide sufficient money for the Housing Choice Voucher Program. They want vouchers to be funded at actual cost rather than a budget-based system. And, they want Congress to carefully consider passage of the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act and to pass a small housing authorities paperwork reduction act.

These were the primary legislative priorities expressed to West Virginia's three U.S. House of Representatives members and two U.S. senators by representatives of various West Virginia Housing Authorities who were in Washington, D.C. March 31 through April 1 as part of the National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials' 2008 Legislative conference.

An estimated 1,000 staff and commissioners from housing authorities across the country were on Capitol Hill as part of conference which is a yearly event held to give housing professionals an opportunity to hear from top HUD officials, lawmakers and key congressional staffers and to visit legislators from their home states.

The West Virginia delegation taking part in the conference were Mark Taylor, President of the West Virginia Association of Housing Agencies and executive director of the Charleston-Kanawha Housing Authority; William Dotson, Executive Director of the Huntington Housing Authority; Larry (L.D.) Ellis of Huntington Housing Authority; Manuel Cartelle, Executive Director of the Beckley Housing Authority; John Martys, Executive Director of the Fairmont and Morgantown housing authorities; George Johnson, Chairman of the Fairmont Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners; Tony Bazzie, Executive Director of the Raleigh County Housing Authority; Dennis Rogers, Executive Director of the Grant County Housing Authority; Vickie Lester of Huntington Housing Authority; Belinda Harness of Mingo County Housing Authority; and Cindy Preast, Executive Director of the Bluefield Housing Authority.

The conference theme was "Journey of Purpose in Changing Times" and the keynote speaker was David Gergen, editor-at-large of U.S. News and World Report and a television commentator who has served in the White House as an adviser to Presidents Nixon, Ford, Reagan and Clinton.

West Virginia's delegation met with lawmakers and/or staff in the offices of U.S. Representatives Shelley Moore Capito, Alan Mollohan, and Nick J. Rahall II, and in the offices of U.S. Senators John D. Rockefeller IV and Robert C. Byrd. A position paper adopted by the WVAHA was presented to these officials. Among the key issues discussed with lawmakers were:

- The Administration's proposal to provide only \$4.3 billion for public housing operating subsidies in FY 2009, which will lead to an 81 percent proration for housing authorities, the smallest amount in history;
- Housing authority representatives urged our state's lawmakers to work toward providing 100 percent funding for the Housing Choice Voucher Program and provide adequate administrative fees for the administration of the program;
- WVAHA members urged representatives and senators to carefully consider the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act, which has passed in the House of Representatives and is pending in the Senate, but which contains a number of conflicting provisions;
- West Virginia's housing authorities urged representatives to pass the Small Public Housing Authorities paperwork Reduction Act, which would exempt non-troubled housing authorities operating 500 or fewer public housing units from the annual plan submission requirements;
- Lawmakers were urged to adequately fund the Community Development Block Grant Program and to provide more funding for homeless assistance programs.
- The Congressional delegation was urged to provide an additional supplemental appropriation to housing authorities this year for public housing operating subsidies.

Parkersburg Housing Authority Celebrates 35 Years of Providing Affordable Housing



The Parkersburg Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners was recognized for their service, commitment and vision for expansion during the Open House/Rededication Ceremony for Homecrest Manor Apartments. Left to Right: James E. Ritchea, Edwin Seymour, Frederick P. Albright, Clifford Casteel.

The Parkersburg Housing Authority recently celebrated 35 years of providing affordable housing to the residents of Parkersburg and Wood County, WV, during an open house and rededication ceremony October 25, 2007. Homecrest Manor, the Authority's only public housing development, was initially opened and dedicated by U.S. Senator Jennings Randolph on January 29, 1972. Pete Minter, Charleston HUD Field Office Director and Robert D. Newell, Mayor, City of Parkersburg, were the featured speakers for the October, 2007, event.

The open house showcased the Authority's rehabilitation and expansion of its administrative office and parking facilities and recognized the individuals and vendors responsible for its design and construction. The project involved the creation of a new community room which was dedicated to long-time Board member, James E. Ritchea. Mr. Ritchea has served on the PHA's Board of Commissioners for over thirty years.



Robert D. Newell, Mayor, City of Parkersburg, D. J. Morris, PHA Executive Director and Pete Minter, HUD Charleston Field Office Director, discuss housing issues prior to the Open/House Rededication.

Huntington Housing Authority Receives Grant Awards

The Huntington WV Housing Authority recently received five (5) grant commitments from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development for the following programs:

Section 8 Program "Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator" position annual award for \$36,233 in grant funds to maintain the staff position.

Two "HMIS" renewal awards for \$37,495 and \$38,274 respectively. These Housing Management Information System awards support computer-related record-keeping and services for individuals and families who received support services.

A Section 8 Program "Shelter-Plus Care renewal award for \$308,952 that supports monthly housing subsidy for 52 current S+C Program participants.

A Section 8 Program "Shelter-Plus Care new award for \$505,440 that supports monthly housing subsidy for 18 new S+C Program participants during the next five years.

HHA Resident Honored



Donald Brown of Washington Square was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for promoting community safety by the Neighborhood Institute of Huntington on December 17, 2007. The ceremony was held in City Council Chambers followed by a reception in the Mayor's Conference Room.

Donald is very active in his community and donates many hours a week to the Boy Scouts of America and the American Red Cross. On school days, Donald can be found early in the morning, regardless of weather, at the school bus stops on Ninth Avenue and again in the afternoons when the children are dropped off, protecting them from drug users and sellers that prey on our youth. "I'm just glad I can do something to protect the kids," said Donald.

Donald is also active in the United Resident Council and is chairman of the URC Crime and Safety Awareness Program. This program has generated considerable support from the Huntington Police Department.

Congratulations Donald and keep up the good work!

Executive Director's Roundtable

WVAHA hosted an Executive Director's Roundtable and training on January 24, 2008 at Charleston-Kanawha Housing Authority's Administrative offices. The focus of the roundtable was the goals of the WVAHA and current issues facing housing authorities.

Immediately following the roundtable, a training was offered regarding harassment, hiring and firing practices, reasonable accommodations and ways to keep your agency out of the courtroom. Tom Kleeh of Steptoe and Johnson conducted the training for those in attendance.

Jason Hought, Chief Financial Officer for the Public Employees Insurance Agency, PEIA, also spoke to the group about the new reporting requirement known as OPEB, Other Postemployment Benefits. OPEB is any benefit after employment that the employer provides its employees that is not a pension plan benefit. More information on OPEB can be found on the PEIA webpage located at www.westvirginia.com/

HHA Becomes A Certified Housing Counseling Agency

The Huntington WV Housing Authority has provided housing counseling services to its participants in certain agency programs since 1995. The housing counseling boundary has expanded. Effective January 2, 2008, the Huntington Housing Authority became a "certificated housing counseling agency", the distinction being the first for a Public Housing Authority in West Virginia per the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

**PHADA Annual Convention & Exhibition
June 1-4, 2008
Las Vegas, NV**

**SERC-NAHRO Summer Conference
June 15-18, 2008
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL**

**NAHRO National Conference
October 26-28, 2008
San Antonio, TX**

**SERC-NAHRO Fall Workshop
November 9-11, 2008
Biloxi, MS**

Article Deadline for the Fall Issue of the WVAHA Collection is August 15, 2008.

Please submit articles to Michele Hatfield at mhatfield@charlestonhousing.com
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