



Berkeley Housing Authority



Section 8 HAP'nings! March 2014

Women's History Month

We didn't have to look far to identify a woman to acknowledge as a (s)hero in the world of affordable housing. Please join me in saluting our own, BHA Board Chair, Carole S. Norris. Carole has been an advocate for affordable housing for more than 30 years. She was one of the founders of the Berkeley Tenants Union and worked as a tenant advocate for many years. As a City of Berkeley employee she had an integral role in *developing and improving homes and communities* for families with limited financial means.



In her role as Vice President, ICF International, she has provided technical assistance to state, city and county housing and community development programs, and trained thousands of housing professionals on HUD/CDBG/HOME and other program rules and regulations. In June 2007 she was appointed Chair of the BHA Board of Commissioners by Mayor Tom Bates. She has been instrumental in (a) *guiding* BHA through the transition from a City department, to a fully independent entity; (b) *ensuring* the Board remained engaged in the affairs of the City and the Authority; (c) *holding* staff accountable to our internal and external customers; (d) *supporting* the decisions and actions necessary to transform the Authority from "troubled" to "high performer" status under HUD's evaluation system; and (e) *overseeing* the repositioning of the public housing units in a way that ensures a high quality housing product and management services, as well as a revenue stream for BHA.

Berkeley Mental Health Services

A vast array of City sponsored mental health services are available to Berkeley residents. The Mobile Crisis unit can be contacted for assistance with a real-time situation (981-5254); assistance with on-going problems, including referrals and consultation can be directed to Crisis, Access & Triage at 981-5290. Note – except for situations where there is an imminent threat of life safety or symptoms of severe and

persistent mental illness, receipt of services is voluntary. *At some point in our lives, all of us can use a little help.*

Beg Bug Infestation

Combating an infestation of bed bugs can be very challenging and costly. You are invited to join BHA staff and others at a training facilitated by Alameda County Health Care Services Agency. The program will include presentations from local pest management professionals, bed bug K9 inspections and an attorney specializing in rental properties. The fee is \$40 per person and includes program materials and continental breakfast and lunch. Registration materials can be found at <http://www.acvcscd.org/documents/bedbug-control-training-flyer.pdf> ; for more information call (510) 567-6826.

Units for Rent?

Reminder to use our free Available Unit Listing service to list your vacant units. The list is updated every Thursday, and shared with households with S8 assistance – that are looking for a place to rent. There is a particularly high demand for accessible units, and pet friendly properties, but all types of units are in scarce supply. In certain cases – BHA can pay apply an enhanced Payment Standard for units with enhanced features to accommodate disabled individuals. Forms are available on line at www.cityofberkeley.info/bha or you can call (981-5470) or fax (981-5480) the information to the office.

Mediation Services

One condition of your HAP contract is that you provide appropriate management services to ensure a quality living environment for your tenants. Some issues are straight forward, while others can require considerable intervention, i.e. disputes between two or more residents. We have found the mediation services offered by the Rent Stabilization Program to be very effective in addressing *gray area* issues. The service is free, and available to owners/tenants with S8 assistance. For more information call (510) 981-7368.

March 2014 Calendar

- Closed every Friday
- Thurs, Mar 13th, Board Meeting (North Berkeley Senior Center, 6:00 p.m.)
- Thurs, Mar 27th, BHA Open House, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.