

# ROGERS PARK BUILDER

SUMMER 2008

www.rpbg.org

## Jarvis El Stop to Receive a Facelift While Work Proceeds on Howard El Station

The Jarvis El station will receive a new face to go with all of the new retail and restaurant establishments which have opened during the past year in Jarvis Square. According to **Ald. Joe Moore**, the El platform will receive a new canopy and lighting and the canopy supports will be repainted. In addition, said Moore, the stationhouse will receive a new ceiling and new station doors, and the station entrance will be repainted.

Funding for the project comes from cost savings on the Green Line reconstruction project, said Moore. Work is expected to be concluded as this issue goes to press. Funding for similar work on the Morse Avenue El station was received several years ago, Moore added.

Meanwhile work on the Howard Street El stop is proceeding apace. The station is scheduled to undergo a complete rehab of the existing Howard Street entrance and extensive repairs to the Howard Street viaduct should be completed by 2010.

Reportedly, when the new station opens, northbound passengers will have to climb up to the 3rd floor level to exit the Howard Station. Southbound passengers will have to climb up to the third level and then down to level 2 (track level) to catch southbound trains. Northbound Evanston passengers will have to go up and over to get to the northbound trains. The station will be accessible for handicapped riders.

The old Howard Street station, on the south side of Howard Street, will close for rebuilding for an estimated two to three years and a new annex/exit will be created on the north side of Howard.

## Organization Takes on Task of Giving Builders and Developers a Voice



*Estella Kiser, RPBG director, and Martin Kerpel, of the Lincoln Park Builders Association, are seen at a networking dinner with the Edgewater Uptown Builders Association. Ms. Kiser spoke on the subject of the newly-created Neighborhood Building Owners Alliance, established to give building owners a voice in legislation affecting their business.*

Just what does the **Neighborhood Building Owners Alliance (NBOA)** represent? According to **Estella Kiser**, a Rogers Park Builders Group director, and one of the founders and president of the NBOA since its origin several years ago, the answer is most clearly described in its mission statement: "NBOA is an alliance of Chicago neighborhood building owners seeking to promote quality and affordable housing by

*(continued on page 2)*

## Jarvis Square Parking and Traffic Issues to be Studied

Several proposed solutions to the parking problem in Jarvis Square and nearby areas on Jarvis and on Greenview were explored at a recent community meeting held at Ald. Moore's office.

A proposal calling for diagonal parking spaces in front of the new restaurant that Tony Barbanente, and his sister Antonella are opening – the Belgian Ale House – on the south side of Jarvis between the Jarvis El Station and Ashland, was rejected because of the limited parking it would offer and the cost. The parking suggestion was one of several proposed at a community meeting called for by Ald. Moore to sound out residents about parking in the area.

Many at the meeting however were open to the suggestion of installing parking meters in the Jarvis Square business district. It was the feeling of many attending, said Moore, that meters would encourage parking turnover and help bring many prospective customers into the area.

In addition, those attending were supportive of an idea to convert Jarvis into a two-way street, either from Clark to Sheridan or from Ashland to Sheridan. It was felt, that this would make it easier for motorists – especially those traveling on Sheridan Road – to visit Jarvis Square. Many business owners agreed that making Jarvis two-way would attract new business to the strip.

Ald. Moore said that he would refer the suggestions of making Jarvis two-way to the City Department of Transportation for their suggestions, especially since longtime residents recalled that Jarvis was a two-way street in the 1970s.

The proposal to install parking meters on Jarvis will be referred to the City Department of Revenue to conduct a study of such action as well as for recommendations on parking meter locations and hours of operation.

Upon completion of the parking meter and traffic studies, Moore said, he will call another community meeting to report back on their findings and to decide on the next course of action.



## Sharp Increase in Foreclosures is Underscored in Panel Discussion

Filings for foreclosure on homes and multi-unit buildings rose more than 112 percent over last year according to a recent program on CNN. That was one of the startling facts that came out of a panel discussion on foreclosures held last April.

**Kevin Smith**, director of financial information for the state treasurer's office, disclosed that last year there were more than 650,000 filings which included notices of default, auction sales issued in the first quarter of 2007, and so forth. "This represents one out of every 194 households and marks a 23 percent increase over the last quarter of 2007," Smith added.

How does this affect property values? Neighborhood values will decline nationwide by \$202 million, Smith disclosed. "This means a loss of \$5,000 in property values for all living close to the foreclosed property," said Smith, adding, "that property will drop exponentially for every foreclosure over one."

For example, if you are a senior and have a home valued at \$250,000, every foreclosure on property near you drops the value of your home by \$5,000. If there are ten foreclosures in the surrounding area, the loss in value of your home would not be \$50,000 but could be closer to \$100,000.

Homeowners who face foreclosure should check the HUD website for all HUD approved housing counselors. They can also call 311 for a list of NHS housing counselors.

Other panel participants were **Jim Siwek**, special agent, HUD; **Andrea Button**, Legal Assistance Foundation; **Caleb Sjoblom**, Rogers Park Community Development Counselor and **Laurene Huffman**, vice president and CRA/Community Development, Mutual Bank.

(*"NBOA" continued from cover*)

encouraging sensible, effective, and fair regulation and by furthering education and the responsible development, ownership, and management of multi-family housing in Chicago's communities."

To put it more simply, the organization was organized to give Chicago apartment building owners and developers a voice that directly affects their business as well as their ability to provide critically needed affordable and quality housing for Chicago's residents.

As Ms. Kiser explained, "It has become more difficult for neighborhood apartment building owners to stay in business and provide affordable and quality housing Chicago needs. There are rules on the books that do not make a whole lot of sense and are contributing to the loss of affordable housing in this city. We are hoping to work together with the city, tenant organizations and other interested parties to come up with some workable solutions."

The NBOA was formed by leaders of various builders organizations including the **Rogers Park Builders Group**, (**Marty Max**, president of the RPBG, is the vice president of the NBOA), the **Edgewater Uptown Builders Association**, the **Lincoln Park Builders of Chicago**, the **Greater Austin Development Association**, and the **Chicago Investors Association, Inc.**, all of which represent tens of thousands of apartment units in Chicago.

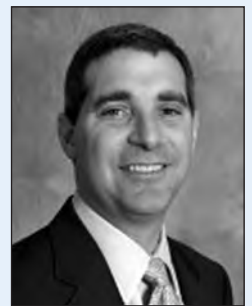
## Man of Many Real Estate Attainments: That's Doug Imber

Douglas S. Imber, co-founder and president of Essex Realty Group, is our member of distinction in this issue of *The Builder*. Doug, who has seen his company grow from just a few agents to seventeen, has been involved in more than \$500 million in the investment real estate business since he founded the firm in 1990. His list of clients includes such well-known companies as BJB Partners, Citibank, ICM Properties, and Belgravia Group, to name just a few.

A licensed real estate broker in the state of Illinois, Doug received his B.A. from Auburn University and then completed his Master's of Management from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management with concentrations in finance and real estate.

Doug was honored as Chicago's top multi-family broker in 2005 by the Chicago Association of Realtors Commercial Forum and was the recipient of the Silver

Award in 2004, the first year the award was presented. He has served as guest speaker at numerous events regarding Chicago's investment real estate market. He served as a table moderator at several Builders Group workshops in real estate in Rogers Park. Besides being president of Essex Realty Group, he is a general partner of approximately 2,000 apartment units throughout the Midwest.



He attributes part of the firm's success to his agents who average ten years of real estate experience and come from diverse real estate backgrounds in law, accounting, finance and appraisal.

Doug lives in Northbrook with his wife, Lisa, a real estate lawyer, and their eight year-old twins, Jacob and Arielle.

# New Rogers Park Police Commander is Thoroughly Grounded in Police Work

Diversity might be the word to best describe the background of **Commander Steven Caluris**, the new man in charge of the Chicago Police Department's District 24, which includes Rogers Park.

A graduate of the University of Illinois in Chicago where he received his bachelor's degree in criminal justice, Commander Caluris has had exposure to many, if not most, of the various aspects of Chicago police work.

After completing his school work, Caluris worked on the University of Illinois police force for five years. Then followed exposure in various parts of Chicago police work, including work on the Tac Team, which is primarily involved in narcotics, and the Incident Car, which focuses on what he called "emerging patterns of crime," which could be burglary, theft, violent crimes or whatever.

Following the advice of past Police Superintendent **Phillip Cline**, who believed that police officers should be exposed to a wide range of police work, Caluris has also worked as Sergeant in Charge of Gang Investigations, and as Sergeant in Charge of Crime Analysis for the Detective Bureau.

In the mid-90s he worked in Rogers Park where he served as Beat Team Leader. In fact, he is thinking of assigning one or two cars specifically for robbery and burglary. For a while he was assigned to handle police activities at Haight School and Senn High School.



Caluris is married and the father of two – a twelve year-old son and a fourteen year-old daughter. In 2003 he was assigned to help keep the anti-war protests on Iraq under control. While crime in Rogers Park has gone down, as he puts it, "We can't do it alone. We need the support of the entire community-businesses, residents, and so forth."

He does not see himself in the role where he has to make drastic changes. "Crime has gone down a lot in Rogers Park, he said, "and we intend to keep it that way."

## Green Matters Forum Scores Success Among 49th Ward Residents

A seven series forum entitled "Why Green Matters Here" proved popular beyond expectation according to Alderman Joe Moore. The series was aimed specifically at the steps 49th ward residents can take to "live a more environmentally conscious and sustainable life."

Moore noted that each of the seven workshop sessions held at Loyola Park had between eighty and one hundred people attending despite the bitter cold weather of February and March.

"Given the strong interest in the ward residents in the environment, and in sustainability, or leaving the earth as you found it," said Moore, "it seemed a natural thing to do."

It started, Moore stated, with the formation of the 49th ward green corps, an organization of community volunteers who are interested in the environment and in staving off global warming, who took to heart the motto: "Think globally and act locally."

As a first step these people attended a one-day program of the City's Department of Environment called the Chicago Conservation Corps, which trains residents to do green projects and sustainability projects in the community," said Moore.

Moore asserted that the demand to take part in the program was so overwhelming that the City Department of Environment agreed to come to Rogers Park to conduct a one-day training session for those unable to enroll in the program.

After this, Moore with the valued assistance of his wife, Barb, worked out the schedule of the "Green Matters" program, with the results noted above. Among the subjects covered in the course were: "Local Actions for Global Solutions," "Recycling and Composting," "Simple Things You Can Do to Green Your Home," and "Food Choices for Healthy Bodies and a Healthy Planet."

Because of the forum's great success, Moore said they are considering presenting a similar forum next year. Forum sponsors included Whole Foods, Dominick's and Greenmakers.

## DevCorp North Honors Outstanding Community Leaders at Annual Awards Benefit

The Annual Awards Benefit of **DevCorp North** proved a big draw as dozens were attracted to the lobby and auditorium of St. Scholastica Academy to partake in the buffet and cocktails, to bid on various prizes contributed by businesses and organizations throughout Chicago, and to witness the awards presentation to various community leaders who have proven their dedication to Rogers Park over the years. The awards were presented by **Tommy FitzGibbon**, president, and **Dorothy Gregory**, secretary. The winners were:

### Friend of Rogers Park Award

Julie Hamos, 18th District State Rep

### Business Leadership Award

Neighbors for a Healthy Rogers Park

### Community Partnership Award

49th Ward Green Corps

### Friends of the Year Award

Rogers Park Fine Wine & Spirits

### President's Award

Mike Erickson

# Developer Shows How to Make a Buck and Meet Housing Needs of the Disabled

By Steven Cain, Commercial Term Lending, Washington Mutual Bank

It took a little creative thinking and a desire to do good while making money, but Marty Cerny has managed to create twelve new units in four Rogers Park apartment buildings that will be both affordable and accessible to people with disabilities.

Marty is Director of Business Development with Koenig & Strey/GMAC; CRF Marketing. He also represents Chicago Graystone Realty with whom he has worked closely for the past six years. Graystone, a developer, owner/operator of rental properties, manages about 750 units, half of which are in Rogers Park.

While considering options to utilize unfinished and unused basement spaces within Chicago Graystone buildings, Marty heard a presentation by Darrell Price, housing policy coordinator of Access Living, who is disabled himself. Darrell spoke of the absence of accessible housing and lack of affordable housing for the disabled.

It was at this meeting that Marty got the idea that if Ald. Joe Moore could help him get the city to allow an increase in unit count, he and Chicago Graystone could commit to creating wheelchair accessible units at affordable rates wherever possible.

It was not difficult to get the support of various Rogers Park groups and the City Departments of Zoning, Housing, Planning and the Mayor's Office of People with Disabilities (MOPDD). But getting city approval for the increase in unit counts in buildings that were already non-conforming proved a real stumbling block.

Happily, these issues have been resolved and Chicago Graystone will finish twelve such units, three in each of four Rogers Park apartment buildings: 1900 W. Farwell and 6964 and 7458 N. Greenview and 1740 W. North Shore. Marty was also able to procure rental subsidies for each unit from the Chicago Low-income Housing Trust Fund, allowing for life changing opportunities for people of low income.

## Gale Students Complete Program in Forming Good Savings Habits



Thirty-two Gale Community Academy students were awarded a "Certificate of Accomplishment" for completing "Money Cents" an educational program which, among other things, teaches students the importance of forming good savings habits. The program was a joint collaboration of the **Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Mutual Bank**, and office of the Illinois State Treasurer, **Alex Giannoullias**.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



BY MARTY MAX  
President, Rogers Park Builders Group

## As I See It A Hard Nut to Crack

As I have stated many times before, doing this column is like therapy for me. One of my goals as president of the Rogers Park Builders Group is to try to change the public's impression of landlords. I choose to do this by citing real life examples involving my colleagues or myself.

As times are tough financially for most of us, we are finding that rents are coming in a little later than normal. Mark Smith (not his real name) was one of those people that fell behind in paying his rent.

Mark has been a pretty good tenant for the six months that he has been in our building. I urge all my tenants to call me if they have any kind of problem, especially in paying the rent on time. I tell them to call me and we can try to solve their problems together. Mark did just that. He arranged payments based on what he thought he could handle.

Mark lived up to those arrangements for about a month or so. All of sudden, Mark stopped paying the rent. When we talked, he said that he would be getting his tax refund in a few weeks and he would then pay the two months rent for which he was late.

The following month, Mark failed to return my calls or to respond to the notes that I left under his door. I finally decided that Mark had no intention of paying the rent that he owed me. We thus filed for eviction. Our attorney's fees, to start with, were \$200. The court fees were \$225. The Sheriff of Cook County's fees were \$110 to cover the cost of notification of the court to the tenant.

Often the Sheriff is unsuccessful in delivering the papers and a "Special Process Server" is hired (this is mandatory). Their fees are \$90. Total cost to start the eviction process – \$625.

The above process could cover a nine week period. When we finally went to court, Mark had no attorney. The court gave him a few weeks to get one. When we went back to court with Mark's new attorney, Mark asked for a jury trial. However, since he couldn't afford the fees to file for a jury trial, the court waived his fees. Since a jury trial could take months, we asked the court for a "use and occupancy – UAO" which requires that Mark has to pay the rent from the time the UAO was granted.

The court granted us the UAO, but a new law was passed this year that if the tenant does not fulfill the court's demands, we have no further recourse. It used to be that in such cases, the owner would obtain immediate possession.

The upshot was that we received a call from Mark's attorney last week stating that they would like to settle the case without a jury trial. He suggested that Mark move out July 22, 2008 (more than six months later), that we agree to no judgment for Mark and that I should pay Mark's attorney fees of \$500. That's the way the case stands as of now.

What would you do? See you next time.

# From College of Humble Beginnings to the Largest Jesuit University in the Country: That's the Story of Loyola University of Chicago

*The year was 1870 and the Roman Catholic order of the Society of Jesus decided to begin a new college on Chicago's West Side to be known as St. Ignatius College. In 1909 the name of the college was changed to Loyola University and the campus site was moved to the shore of Lake Michigan in Rogers Park. From its humble beginnings, Loyola has grown to become the largest Jesuit University in the country with a current enrollment of 15,500 and the school has been ranked by U.S. News & World Report as the 49th best value in the country. To find out more about Loyola and what it means to Rogers Park, The Builder spent some time recently with Jennifer Clark, Loyola's director of community relations. The upshot of that conversation follows:*

**The Builder:** What do they mean when they say that Loyola is the 49th best value in the country?

**Clark:** Well, they are referring to several things: tuition, room and board, student/teacher ratio, financial aid packages, and good advising by our counselors. It should be noted that while going to Loyola may be a good value, the cost of tuition and room and board is not much less than that of such well-known schools as the University of Chicago and Northwestern, and more than forty percent of our students receive financial aid packages.

**The Builder:** How religiously diverse is the student body at Loyola?

**Clark:** Probably a lot more diverse than you might imagine. We are well represented by all of the major religious denominations, including Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism, and those of the Muslim faith, which is our second largest group incidentally.

**The Builder:** What is so special about Loyola, anyhow?

**Clark:** For one thing, about forty percent of our students are the first in their families to go to college. It has been this way since the start and continues to this day.

**The Builder:** You have three other campuses (besides the Lake Shore campus) The Water Tower, Rome Center, and the Medical Center in Maywood. How do you tell which school is located at which campus?

**Clark:** The science departments, among others, are located on the Lake Shore Campus, as is the Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing, and the School of Education. The Center for Liberal Education is at our Rome Center. Most of our professional schools are located at our Water Tower Campus. These include the School of Business Administration, Graduate School of Business, School of Social Work, School of Continuing and Professional Studies, School of Communication, and Law School. Then there is our medical campus in Maywood which houses the Stritch School of Medicine, the Loyola Hospital, and

the various research departments, as well as the graduate school of nursing. Oh yes, we recently acquired the Gottlieb Hospital which is located in Melrose Park.

**The Builder:** Sounds like it's been a gradual upward climb since the school's founding.

**Clark:** Not exactly. Not too many know that in 2001 we were in bad financial shape and were facing an operating deficit of \$40 million. But the school did an almost immediate turnaround when our new president, Father Garanzini took office, and we have been on a continuous upgrade ever since.

**The Builder:** Who are some of your famous alumni?

**Clark:** It would probably take all the space you have for this issue to list them all, but certainly you would have to include Bob Newhart, who mentioned Loyola University several times when he had his own comedy show on television. Then there is Tom Dart, the Sheriff of Cook County; Lisa Madigan, Attorney General of Illinois, and her dad, Michael Madigan, Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives; Timothy J. Mitchell, General Superintendent of the Chicago Park District, and former Congressman Dan Rostenkowski, to name just a few

**The Builder:** What's hot at Loyola right now?

**Clark:** There's nothing that makes me prouder than the fact that all of our new buildings are "eco-friendly" or LEED certified or Green. Our new library, more properly known as the Richard J. Klarcheck Information Center, has no books. It was specifically designed as a one-step center which makes available for our students: 222 computer workstations, circulating laptops, a media center, and 700 computer use and study seats, among others. And it is practically all visible to Lake Michigan and the outdoors. It has won several international awards. As one student put it: "It's beautiful. Sitting next to the huge windows, I feel like I'm outside. I can study here for hours and the time just flies by."

Also, work has also begun on an attractive new 600-bed dormitory which is called Loyola station. It will be located on Loyola Street west of Sheridan Road. The second phase of this project, consisting of 400 units, will be located at Albion and Sheridan Road but has not yet been approved.



*Shown with a Loyola banner is Jennifer Clark, director of community relations. Loyola of Chicago now has the highest enrollment of any Jesuit college in the nation.*

## Geneva Kayak Opens Store in Rogers Park

**Geneva Kayak's** second store has opened in Rogers Park, a more convenient location for customers in the city as well as customers located in the northern suburbs. From its Rogers Park location, the store offers kayak demonstrations during its store hours, daily kayak tours, and instruction. The Geneva Kayak Center is the only BCU endorsed coaching center located here as well as an ACA Pro school offering a full range of instruction from beginner to advanced courses. Kayak lines include: Eddyline Kayaks, Impex Kayaks, P&H Kayaks, Sea Kayaking UK (NDK), Valley & Wilderness Centers.

## OUR MISSION

The Rogers Park Builders Group's mission is to encourage and support responsible residential and commercial property investment, development, and ownership in the Rogers Park community. Looking far beyond bricks and mortar, the RPBG initiates and supports collaboration on city and community actions to create a destination community.

## RPBG Executive Committee

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## Please Send Information About Becoming a Member of the Rogers Park Builders Group

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Mail to: Mary Jane Sacks, Administrative Director  
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 e-mail: rpbkg@rogerspark.com  
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## Property Owner Wins Fight to Demolish North Shore School in Favor of a Parking Lot

Sometimes even the best of intentions and legal documentation needed to carry out your plans can be thwarted if such a move is controversial. Such would seem to be the case of Swanette Triem, a long-time Rogers Park resident and a member of the Builders Group, who owns some property near 1209 Chase.

In a presentation at the March Rogers Park Builders Group board meeting, Ms. Triem described her problems in demolishing the closed North Shore School building at 1217 W. Chase to replace it with a landscaped parking lot for use of a nearby building which she owns.

According to Ms. Triem the school, which was formerly the Birchwood Country Club, was opened in 1938 with twenty-two children. It was closed in early 2006 when it was unable to continue operations due to financial problems. Ms. Triem acquired the property on which the school was built later that year. She described parts of the school building as literally rotting away.

A contractor hired by Ms. Triem estimated that it would take at least a million dollars to bring the building up to code. While some of the thirty or so who attended a community meeting favored reopening the school, no one was willing to take over the operation of the school, including several well-known private schools in the area.

Although the building is not considered architecturally significant to rate as a landmark according to the Chicago Landmarks Commission, and is not protected from demolition by the Lakefront Protection Ordinance, Ms. Triem observed, opponents of the demolition, with the support of the Environmental Protection Agency, had been able to keep the project on hold for several months. But Ms. Triem has been able to get the legal documentation she needed and has been finally able to demolish the building, she reported.