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PROVIDING INFORMATION ON RESOURCES AND EVENTS THAT IMPROVE THE LIFESTYLE OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY

SACCC LOBBIES FOR MORE AFFORDABLE DISABLED HOUSING

Krista Christophe



Ms. George's building.

The South Austin Coalition Community Council held a press conference near the home of Ms. Lauretta George. There, the member of the group protested for the need of accessible housing for the disabled in Austin. The South Austin Coalition wanted the protest to bring attention

to what they believe is a lack of accessible housing in the West Side neighborhood and reserve money from the recent stimulus package (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009).

Ms. George, a fifty-seven year old woman, has lumbar spinal



Ms. Lauretta George in her apartment.

stenosis. Her spinal canal is narrowed and causes limited movement in her legs. She is also ailed by lung disease, and as a result, uses a twenty-four hour supply of oxygen. Because of her age, Ms. George cannot enter public nursing homes. She must wait until she reaches the age of fifty-five to join a public senior housing development in the city of Chicago.

Ms. George lives alone in a three bedroom apartment on Washington. She has rented there for ten months at \$700 per month. Her rent does not include her gas, light, or water bills. In these past ten months, Ms. George has supplemented her only income - \$649 per month in disability benefits - with \$3,000 she received in a settlement from her previous landlord. She described her previous housing on West Iowa Avenue as "beyond dilapidated" and used the money from the settlement to move to this more accessible apartment on the garden level of her building rather than the second floor.

To supplement her income, Ms. George tried to work with Easter Seals, an employment program for senior citizens, however, moving to and from transit daily was too much of stress on Ms. George's health and she was unable to participate in the program. Unable to supplement her income, Ms. George will more than likely have to move to a different apartment.

She has had no success in finding a building that is accessible to the disabled and meets her budget. She constantly argues with public senior housing managers about her admission. "I've been trying to find suitable and affordable housing since 2005," Ms. George stated, "I told them sick is sick. Sickness doesn't have an age."

Facing eviction, Ms. George teamed up with the South Austin Coalition Community Council to bring publicity to her situation. Assistant Director of the organization, Ms. Theresa Welch-Davis stated "There is very little accessible and affordable housing in this city for people with disabilities. The South Austin Coalition will announce a campaign to fight for more accessible housing to help disabled residents like Ms. George."

Ms. Davis-Welch stated the South Austin Coalition's goal is to "turn a light on the lack of affordability in disabled housing." She wants to find a way to have money set aside for the disabled in the stimulus package funds that have been designated to go to low income families and senior citizens.

The South Coalition campaign has not been announced but is slated to begin in the coming weeks.

To contact the South Austin Coalition Community Council please call (773) 287-4570.

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M3 PROJECT: THE AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE YOUTH JUST A DAY AT THE MUSEUM, A BULLS GAME, A NEIGHBORHOOD TOUR, AND DINNER



M3 Youth at the Chicago Museum paired off an older male with a younger male and they had to find answer to questions about the exhibits.



Mr. John Henry, teacher at North Lawndale College Prep with youth watching the play to victory.



The bus tour with YMEN's Marcus Thorne speaking about the next stop at the Bronzeville Museum, hosted by Harold Lucas.

The M3 (Making Men through Mentoring Project) is a mentoring program funded by the United Way to the Young Men's Educational Network and Lawndale Christian Health Center in North Lawndale. Both LCHC and

YMEN have expanded the impact of the project by subgranting to six organizations, the first year. Currently, there are four community entities which include North Lawndale College Prep, Lawndale Business and

Local Development, Lawndale Community Church and Strategic Human Services.

Recently, M3 took over 60 young males to the Chicago History Museum, the Bulls Basketball game, a tour of

the Bronzeville community, and dinner at the Wishbone restaurant near Oprah Winfrey studios.

The museum visit, the first destination after meeting at NLCP, included a game of answering a set of

prescribed questions which had prize winning incentive to the pairs that answered the most questions about exhibits in the museum. This forced the youth to hunt and read information

See Youth page 4

Visit us on our website at www.nlcen.org for more articles, photos, information and more.

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HEALTH & THE ECONOMY

One of the major issues of the recent presidential campaign was health care. Health care costs have become an escalating burden for employers and consumers alike. Research has shown that total health spending is reduced when consumers bear more responsibility for their health and the expenses related to it. One of the best ways to increase life expectancy while reducing disability is to encourage a culture of self-care practices.

Self care is personal health maintenance. It is the care taken by individuals towards their own health and well being. Self care includes the actions individuals take in their role as care givers for their children, their families, and others to stay fit and to maintain good physical, mental, and spiritual health.

Extreme self care means making choices and decisions that honor our soul in everyday living. It means feeding ourselves whole foods, moving our bodies every day, balancing silence with activity, and surrounding ourselves with supportive, like-minded people who are committed to improving or restoring health and uplifting the quality of their lives as well.

More than 75% of people surveyed in the United Kingdom said if they had guidance or support from a professional or peer they would feel far more confident about taking care of their own health. Research shows that supporting self care can improve health outcomes and increase patient satisfaction. Our intention is to support individuals, families, institutions, and communities in their efforts to practice extreme self care. During 2009, the North Lawndale Community News focuses on cost-effective ways you can improve your health by practicing self care.

The Economy has made itself the number one issue with gas prices reaching almost \$5.00 per gallon and having a domino effect on everything else sold, except housing stock which experienced a terrible decline with the high rate of foreclosures. The Chicago metropolitan area reported 5,821 new foreclosure filings in December, a foreclosure rate of one new foreclosure filing for every 499 households — more than twice the national average. That brought the area's fourth quarter foreclosure total to 16,949 and its 2006 foreclosure total to 57,706, according to Realty Trac.

Even transportation on the CTA went on the rise with one day passes increasing by seventy-five cents and monthly passes increased by \$10.00 from \$75.00 to \$85.00. Those are just a few of the increases.

The North Lawndale Community News this year is expanding on last years financial focus to give attention to its broader parent the economy. Saving and making smarter shopping decisions will help stop us losing through wasteful choices. Finding new ways to increase our income is a necessity for many in an area where gentrification is not going to stop.

One of the hardest things to change is behavior. Modifying behavior seems to be easy when it comes to pain. Social pain lack of money has to be extreme for many to change. 2009 should be different for many and of course many will continue toward economic mistakes and financial ruin.

But in today's information society there is no excuse for not making smart choices. Financial literacy alone is not enough. Look what happened to Lehman Brothers and what's happening to many other financial institutions let alone individuals, families, and small businesses.

Solutions come to the internet, books, economic experts, financial counselors and experts, the media and your economical neighbors.

The North Lawndale Community News will tap into resources and share them with you, our reader. So to help you improve your health and your economy keep reading The North Lawndale News. We say yours because some may not modify their behavior, except when the pain comes and still some won't change. Your input is also welcome. If you have some information that is beneficial please submit it. Let's make smarter health and economic moves for life in 2009.

THE NORTH LAWDALE COMMUNITY NEWS

The North Lawndale Community News is now published weekly by Strategic Human Services. Our purpose is to help inform our community on resources, events, and issues relevant to them and our neighboring communities. Our community includes those who live, work, worship in, and/or care about North Lawndale. Our focus is on positive, productive solutions, that will improve the lifestyle of our community members.

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THE PROBLEM WITH RODENTS AND WHAT THE PEOPLE CAN DO ABOUT IT

Thaddeus C. Budzynski



A residence where garbage is piled up and garbage cans are open and this makes it easy for rodents to find food.



Another example of over filled garbage cans.

People in Pilsen and the Near West Side are having problems with rodents coming from the alleys and entering houses. When rodents enter houses -where it's warmer in the winter - they crawl on the kitchen counter and tables looking for food and leave unhealthy diseases.

Common diseases caused by rats are Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS), Murine Typhus, Rat-bite fever (RBF), Salmonella enterica serovar, Typhimurium, Lepptospirosis, Eosinophilic. There is a web site you can go to at www.cdc.gov for more information on diseases carried by rats and how these diseases will affect you.

The people I talked to who have complained about rats say that it doesn't help if only a few neighbors are keeping their property clean and the others don't. It takes a whole neighborhood working together to help keep the neighborhood clean and safe from rats. There are people who care and people who don't care. What can we do to encourage the people who don't care? The people who don't care are those who need to be educated. We need to get someone from the city who can set up community meetings to educate these people and try to get them to understand that the rat problems can affect them as well as

everybody else. Other complaints were that some neighbors leave trays of food for stray cats.

Before dumping cans, bottles, and some wrappers in your kitchen trash can, it makes sense to first rinse them clean in the sink. This will eliminate food odors that will attract rodents such as rats and roaches. Food left rotting for awhile in kitchen trash cans will form maggots. Maggots look like tiny white worms and can crawl out of your kitchen trash can when you open the lid. So, dump your kitchen trash as often as possible. Your kitchen will smell cleaner.

There are also many different kinds of diseases that come from roaches. You can find these diseases by going to the web site at www.PlanetCockroach.com. Scroll down the web page and click on [American Roach](#).

When dumping your trash in the alley behind your house, make sure it is secured in a tightly closed trash bag. You don't want any kind of aroma from food that will attract rats coming in from the alley. Rats squeeze through cracks they find around your house to enter. Sealing cracks around your house will help eliminate rats from entering. Rats not only leave diseases, but they also do damage to your property, such as eating holes through your walls.

Break down all boxes before inserting them in the alley trash carts that the city provides for you. This will make space inside the cart, leaving room for bags of trash. You want all trash to be in the cart with the lid shut, and not left on the ground. You want to make it difficult for rats to crawl inside looking for leftover food scraps.

There are also problems with neighbors never having enough room in their trash carts because they don't break their boxes down. They take carts away from their neighbor's property to avoid placing trash on the ground behind their property. That leaves their neighbor with one less cart or none, forcing the neighbors to leave their trash on the ground. Please be considerate to your neighbors and don't remove their trash carts from their property. Just break down your boxes or call 311 for extra carts if needed.

According to Matt Smith, Chief Spokesman for the Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation, the city provides 1.5 million trash carts throughout the city to prevent rats. If carts are damaged or the lids cannot properly close,

Mr. Smith said to call 311 and request to have these carts replaced at no charge. When calling 311, your message will be forwarded to the Dept. of Streets and Sanitation for new carts.

Mr. Smith said to make sure the city scavenger service picks up your trash. When they empty your trash cart, leftover food is oftentimes found stuck to the insides of the carts. "Property owners," Smith reminded, "are responsible for keeping the ground around their property clean, as well as inside their trash carts." Mr. Smith said the city has a motto: "If rats can't feed, then rats can't breed." People can cut off the food supply to rats by closing their trash cart lid shut, and not leaving trash on the ground.

Also according to Mr. Smith, dog owners' cleaning up after their dog's waste helps to eliminate the population of rats. They should then properly dispose the waste into the cart with the lid shut. Dog owners who don't pick up after their dogs are helping rats get fed. Dog waste is a source of food for rats. Because of its high levels of protein, dog waste helps rats to grow bigger and turns rats away from the city's poison bait, which the city spreads out in alleys.

If you're having a problem with rats, you can call the city's rodent control at 312-746-5230 with your complaint.

There is also a web site you can go to at www.cityofchicago.org. Click on [STREETS AND SANITATION](#), then in the drop down menu look for [service programs](#) on the left side of your screen and click on that for information.

Let's have a cleaner environment and help keep our alleys clean!

HIDDEN ENTREPRENEURIAL JEWEL IN NORTH LAWDALE

Renita Walker



Chris Teague in his studio.

When you think of the word "entrepreneur" you might think of people such as, Donald Trump, Oprah Winfrey, Bill Gates just to name a few. When I researched the word entrepreneur I found that it means: "An individual who rather than working as an employee takes the risk of running and starting their own business." I found out that some young entrepreneurs start out as early as 6 and 7 years old by investing with the help of their parents. Meet one of Lawndale's entrepreneurs, Chris Teague, who got his start from his father, Mr. Cordell Teague. Chris' father got his start from his father, who was a member of the Dozier Boys Blues Band which originated back in 1946.

Talk about history repeating itself! Mr. Cordell Teague is also a famous member of the Shirley Johnson Blues Band and you can catch them grooving at 536 North Clark Street. Chris is a twenty-six year old Lawndale resident that attended Kennedy High School. He's the father of two gorgeous little girls, Haidiyah (six years old) and Christina (one and half years old). Chris is a man who can get any work done with children of these two ages around. Talk about versatility!

Chris operates a studio out of his apartment. His equipment is set up in a large closet; there he makes custom tracks. He attributes his musical ability to his dad. Chris has been playing the piano since he was seven years old and he produced music at thirteen years old. Chris' musical experience landed him opportunities to make music for a group called Precise. This young entrepreneur is very skilled; he not only makes music, he is also very familiar with computer repair such as software and hardware installations, virus and Spyware destruction, wireless networking, operating system upgrades, new installations, internet trouble shooting, and data and password recovery. Chris will repair things that would normally cost a fortune for a nominal fee.

One of Chris' favorite quotes is "Nothing beats a failure but a try—if you don't try you won't know if you'll fail or not. So, don't be afraid to step out on faith." When asked if he ever faced any struggles in life, he stated the only struggle that he cared to talk about was the one time when he lived with his grandmother and she was on him about getting a job. Everywhere Chris looked no one was calling him back, bills were piling up and no money was coming in. The thought of letting his grandma down was the turning point for Chris. That's when he got up and put his best foot forward. Becoming an entrepreneur was the outcome. Like most entrepreneurs, especially in Lawndale, he admits it takes hard work, dedication, commitment and most of all - faith and courage.

When asked, "What is it like to be a young entrepreneur" Chris' reply was: "I love it. I enjoy what I do. I don't have to punch a time card every day. It is my passion and whenever you're doing something you should at least enjoy what you're doing. It's exciting, it's a lot of fun and it doesn't really feel like work. You don't have the regular hustle and bustle of a 9 to 5."

Chris networks with few entrepreneurs. He doesn't converse with a colleagues a lot but he does meet a lot of people in his business. He believes being an entrepreneur is easy and hard, "Yes, it's easy but it can be hard and you must stay active, ahead of the game, on top of new technology, and constantly keep up with new ideas and you have to do research. You must study always." Chris gives this advice to young entrepreneurs: "If it's something that's really in your heart, do it. Do not be afraid."

I personally have had the pleasure of working with Chris. I've made my first cd and he's removed a virus from my computer. I can honestly say it's great to have a hidden jewel right here in the Lawndale community.

If you'd like more information or you'd like the many services of Kryss Production and Computer Repair offer you can contact Chris at 773-972-0583.

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Youth from Front page



M3 youth visit the Bronzeville museum hosted by Harold Lucas, who also guided the community tour



M3 youth eating dinner at the Wishbone restaurant.



John Ehresman (black sweater, blue collar, turns head while youth quench their thirst. Ehresman was the main coordinator for the outing activities.



Marcus Thorne, (grey shirt, tan pants) John Henry, back to reader, and Brandon Lenore, both NLCP teachers with youth

associated with exhibit. Some of the prizes were an MP3 player, candy bars and a little more premium seating at the bulls game.

There was some interesting history at discovered at the museum. There is an exhibit about the original Washington Park race track where the winner of the first American Derby in 1883 was won by an African American, Isaac Burns Murphy, who was entered in the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame.

The M3 project in its second year has held several group projects, meetings, and retreats to help steer young males to make positive choices in life. The separate groups, also have independent programs for the mentoring programs. Each group was allowed in the

beginning to supplement their programs with their own additional funding because of the smaller grant they awarded. LISC, Local Initiatives Support Corporation and Lawndale Christian Development Corporation has helped Strategic Human Services provide an employment based mentoring program delivering community newspapers, learning the importance of earning money legally and access to its computer lab.

YMEN received a grant through Advocate Bethany Fund to that has allowed them to offset costs associated with a Christian retreat last summer and all day retreats like the subject of this article.

For more information on the M3 Male Mentoring program call 773 522-9636

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Building a Better Community

Dorothy J. Williams

One way to better our community is to make sure the infrastructure—the foundations of the community like roads, bridges, sewers, sidewalks and lighting—are in good shape. A poorly maintained infrastructure can be dangerous to pedestrians and motorists, and drives down property values. Undoubtedly, living with hazardous and unattractive conditions year after year has a negative affect on the residents. Make sure the infrastructure where you live is in good shape by requesting capital improvements. Generally speaking, capital improvements are improvements that prolong the life of an asset (such as roads, buildings, bridges, sewers, sidewalks and street lights); restore the asset to like-new condition; or make the asset capable of new and different uses. Replacing an entire street light with a new type of light would be a capital improvement. Replacing the bulb or cover on a street light with the same kind of equipment already in use would not be a capital improvement. Replacing a roof is a capital improvement; patching the roof is not. Capital improvements must also produce benefits that last more than one tax year. What capital improvements are needed where you live?

Observe

Look around your neighborhood. Are there enough street lights? Do lights need to be removed and replaced? Would the installation of cameras in the area curtail undesirable activity? Are roads or alleys unpaved or pavement worn thin? Are curbs crumbling or too low? If the top of the curb is at or near the level of the pavement, the curb is too low. Are sidewalks cracked, broken or uneven? Are sewers working properly? Does an intersection need a stop sign, stoplight or turn signal to improve traffic safety? Are railroad crossings rough or missing gates or other safety features? Does a public building need expansion or replacement? Are transit facilities in disrepair?

Organize

Make a list of items that need attention. For each item on your list, write out a brief description of what improvement is needed, the street address or nearest intersections. Include in your description of how residents are affected by not having this issue addressed and what action you are requesting to correct the problem. Be brief; three or four sentences should be plenty. If possible, photograph the problem area and include the photo with the description. Prioritize your requests so that the most important improvements appear first and items that are less important are further down the list. If the person reviewing your list has only a few minutes to do so, your top priorities are sure to be seen. Make several copies of your work. Keep one copy for your records, and have others available to distribute to persons who will be make decisions on capital spending and improvements. Next, you will need to notify the appropriate authorities.

Inform

There are three ways for residents to inform City officials of needed capital improvements in your area:

* **Contact your alderman.** Every alderman receives an annual budget to make capital improvements in his or her ward. These funds are spent at the discretion of the alderman. Send a copy of your requests to the alderman, asking that these items be included in the capital plan for your ward.

* **Call 311.** "Chicago's other help line" is the number to call when reporting problems that need immediate attention, such as pothole repair, standing water in the street or garbage not being picked up. It is also the number to call to register improvements needed on your block or in your neighborhood. Calls for all capital improvements are registered on a list and considered when capital improvement projects are planned and the capital budget is

being developed.

* **Attend public hearings.** Each spring, the City of Chicago holds public hearings at various locations across the city to hear residents' requests and concerns for their neighborhoods. At the hearings, residents are given the opportunity to speak to Capital Improvement committee members and request improvements for their neighborhoods. In order to give everyone who wants to speak an opportunity to do so, community members are only given a minute or so to present their requests. It is critical that you organize your thoughts before attending the hearing. Make sure that the committee hears the improvements you're requesting before your time is up by prioritizing your list of requests. Talk about the most important improvements first. If there's time left while you're at the microphone, talk about other items on your list. If time runs out before you've addressed everything on your list, tell the committee that there are additional items that you did not get to, and submit your list to the committee. If you documented and photographed needed improvements and made copies as described earlier, this would be the time to hand a copy (or copies) to committee members. Avoid yelling, angry tirades and rambling speeches or your message will be lost, and no one will remember what improvements were requested. It is also helpful to have your family, neighbors and other community members attend the hearings to show their support for the requested improvements.

For the 2009 capital improvement season, public hearings begin in April and end in early

May. A hearing is currently scheduled in North Lawndale for late April. Watch for mailings and newspaper announcements, or call 311 for more details.

Requests for improvements through all three sources are reviewed and prioritized into a single list of projects. Projects may be funded from the aldermanic budgets, from Capital Committee reserves or a combination of sources. Be aware that every request may not be addressed the first year it was requested. Funds are limited, and projects lower on the list of priorities may get deferred or held off. Projects that are not funded in the current capital cycle remain on the list and get carried over to future planning years.

Repeat

Keep an eye out for improvements that were made and scratch them off your list. Note requests that were not fulfilled, and add any new items to your list. It may be necessary to repeat the request an improvement to make sure it stays on the City's list of capital projects and gets prioritized. There's nothing wrong with submitting an item from this year's list on your list of requests for next year. You may want to point out items that have been repeatedly requested. Submit your list of requests again to the alderman, and present your requests at public hearings during the next capital budgeting cycle. It takes time, planning and persistence, and—yes we can—build a better community.

Dorothy J. Williams is a member of the City of Chicago's Capital Improvement Advisory Committee and a resident of North Lawndale.

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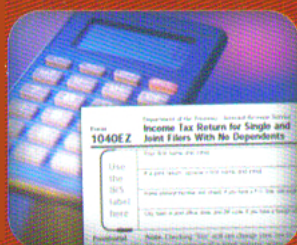
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AT THE FLICKS

David H. Schultz



Seth Rogen and Anna Faris in *Observe and Report*

OBSERVE AND REPORT (***) “Observe and Report” could be best described as the dark side of Kevin James’ “Paul Blart: Mall Cop” mixed with a little sardonic twist from Jim Carrey’s “Cable Guy.” This combo might give this film its own underground cult status.

This is a dense comedy that is demented and explicit at times, yet hilarious. “Observe and Report” is that kind of comedy one isn’t supposed to enjoy laughing at but you do because it’s fun to watch and be caught off-guard.

It becomes clear that it was writer-director Jody Hill’s intention to make a film that looks familiar in one way, but suddenly does or says something to “freak out” its audience.

Also, part of Hill’s twisted scheme is an even bigger surprise that comes from the unlikely bloated appearance of Seth Rogen. His usual, harmless and lovable lug screen role becomes something other than what we usually expect in a Seth Rogen comedy.

This time, Rogen goes “psychotic” into a strict minded “character mode” that we’ve never seen before. Rogen is the film’s catalyst for this “dark, crazy, awesome journey” portraying Ronnie Barnhardt, a crass, lonely, delusional yet dedicated rent-a-cop who is a bi-polar pill popper prone to

fits of rage and violence.

Ronnie is the poster boy of awkwardness, an unsympathetic jerk who lives at home with his alcoholic, but loving mother (Celia Weston). Like a misguided drill sergeant, Ronnie runs roughshod as the head of security at the Forest Ridge Shopping Mall over his inexperienced rookies that include twin brothers and a college student joined by Ronnie’s loyal assistant, Dennis (Michael Peña).

Through the course of the film, the suburban mall becomes subjected to a rash of incidents that begins with a raincoat-wearing nude male flasher assaulting customers in the mall’s parking lot. Ronnie views the pervert’s actions as an attack on everything that is sacred and pure at “his” mall and intends to seize the opportunity to prove himself as good as any real cop.

Also, Ronnie has an infatuation toward Randi (Anna Faris), a cosmetic counter saleswoman who considers him too weird for her. Randi turns out to be this after hours “party girl” who’s willing to bed down with any man for booze and pills. Ronnie misreads as his dream girl when she agrees to a date night of heavy drinking and drug use.

Ronnie is mostly ignorant and blinded to whom he should be with: a sensitive and descent girl, Nell (Collette Wolfe), a counter girl at a bun shop with a leg injury working from a wheelchair who shows interest by providing Ronnie with a daily free cup of coffee to listen to his concerns. However, through her work hours, Nell grows weary from being tormented and teased by the store owner (Patton Oswalt).

Soon, a bigger threat to Ronnie’s domain arrives on the scene. A real police officer, Detective Harrison (Ray Liotta) and his partner Mark (Dan Bakkedahl) are called by the mall management to handle the investigation.

Naturally, Ronnie feels threatened to the point of using his inept theories. Acting on these delusions interferes with Harrison’s police work

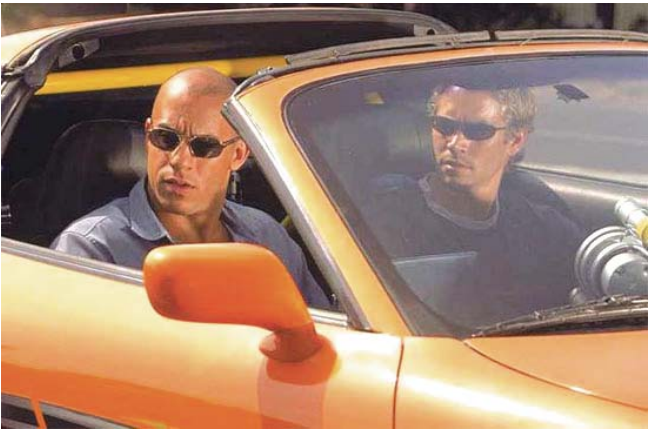
which enrages the intimidating detective. Harrison eggs Ronnie into pursuing his dream of becoming a real and better cop than Harrison by filling out the police exam for consideration at the Police Academy.

However, soon after Ronnie is been evaluated as a “risk factor”; this disqualifies him from being considered as a police officer. Somehow, this doesn’t deter Ronnie who remains undaunted and defiant to the point of forcing himself in Harrison’s car for a “drive through” street experience. Harrison uses this opportunity to embarrass Ronnie in an antic that would have gotten a real cop suspended.

When Harrison dumps Ronnie into the toughest urban area, he encounters minority drug dealers led by a drug dealing kid’s father played as a cameo bit by Danny McBride. McBride starred and co-created Jody Hill in the short lived HBO series, “East Bound and Down” about a relentlessly arrogant ex-major league ballplayer. Hill uses the brutality of the Rogen - McBride altercation to flip the outcome with Ronnie being surer of his destiny while registering one of the film’s biggest laughs.

Later on, the mall suffers a late night burglary in one of its shoe stores. The criminal turns out to be right under Ronnie’s nose, this is revealed from Ronnie’s loyal assistant. While trying initially to help Ronnie loosen up and liberate himself during their night of taking recreational drugs and beating up skateboarders Dennis reveals he’s been robbing the mall stores after hours, and tries to enlist Ronnie to join him. This, of course, goes against Ronnie’s moral sensibilities.

There is a method to Hill’s madness that does bring out some sense of redemption, self discovery and love to who and what matters. Still, Jody Hill offers a quirky showcase for his fascination with this kind of deluded, self important character that



Vin Diesel and Paul Walker in *Fast and Furious*

can have his “moment of glory” by taking an ordinary and even familiar situation and turning the outcome upside down by his irrational response. He gives us something different and wickedly funny to laugh at with the tightrope nature of this interesting and funny movie.

R; 85min. A Warner Bros. Pictures Release – Presented at selected theaters.

FAST AND FURIOUS (**) The original cast is back, but only together briefly for about one-fourth of its time as a membership. Hot cars and daredevil speed racing stunt work shine more than the sexy hot rod vixens strutting their stuff. It is the male testosterone and rivalry in this fourth installment that brings the cast up to speed.

The film opens under separate and daring “where they are now” intros: Dom Toretto (Vin Diesel) and his sister Mia (Jordana Brewster) are using their unique and dangerous driving skills with their crew to steal a convoy truck transporting gas tankers across the rough terrain of the Dominican Republic.

Meanwhile, in Los Angeles, FBI agent Brian O’ Connor (Paul Walker) chases down a felon for an important name: David Parks is involved with kingpin Arturo Braga’s drug cartel operation in

See Flicks page 7

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CCIL will appear on Chicago Access Network Television (CAN TV) every Thursday at 4:30 p.m. beginning April 2 through June 25, 2009. Tune in to channel 21 of Chicago's local cable station Hotline 21 is a live, interactive, call-in show. **Viewers are encouraged to call 312-738-1060** with questions or comments. Look for **Jim LoBianco**, Deputy Commissioner of Homeless Services; **Rick Roberts**, former CCIL CEO and White House Point of Light Award Winner; **CCIL residents and alumni** and a variety of inspiring, engaging guests to appear on upcoming shows this season!

PLEASE JOIN THE LAY ORGANIZATION OF GREATER ST. PAUL AME CHURCH for our Annual Lay Day Service Theme: Are You Committed? (II Timothy 3:15) Sunday, April 19, 2009 at 3:00 PM. Guest Speaker Licentiate Wilbert Cook, Carey Tercentenary AME Church Ministerial Staff & Founder: A Hand Up Recovery Homes, NFP. Mrs. Delores Bates, Lay President - Rev. Cynthia Johnson, Pastor. Greater St. Paul AME Church, 4236 W. Cermak Road, Chicago, Illinois 60623, 773.522.4812

ALL CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS are invited to participate in the second Chicago Farmers Markets Reusable Bag Design contest. The winner will receive a \$1,000 scholarship and have his/her design displayed on all reusable shopping bags handed out at Chicago Farmers Markets throughout the city this summer. Two runners-up will each receive a \$500 scholarship. Entries must be submitted to COUNTRY Financial by April 20. All entries must include the phrase "2009 Chicago Farmers Markets" and may also include the theme "The 30th Anniversary of the Markets." For more information or official entry rules and information, please call (312) 861-4712.

ATTENTION YOUTH AGES 14 - 17! APPLY NOW TO BECOME A CFS FREEDOM FELLOW. Calling Youth Activists!!! Spend a year with the Chicago Freedom School! Applications for the 2009 Freedom Fellowship are now available! The Freedom Fellowship is an opportunity for young people to get paid to learn about social justice and work with other youth from across the city to take action. The program features a six-week summer leadership institute, monthly activism trainings and support for the development of an action plan throughout the year. The program is open to youth ages 14 - 17 as of June 1, 2009. If enrolled in school applicants must be entering the 9th, 10th or 11th grade and NOT attending summer school. However, applicants are not required to be enrolled in school. The deadline for the application is **Friday, May 1st**. You may download the application from the Chicago Freedom School website **HERE**. You may also complete the application online **HERE**. Please contact Hilda Franco with any questions. Email: hilda@chicagofreeschool.org
Phone: 312.435.1201 Chicago Freedom School 719 S. State St. Chicago, Illinois 60605 312-435-1201.

Flicks from page 6

Mexico, using hot rodders to speed dodge their cargo from the U.S. authorities' radar and helicopter and jets detections.

Soon after, Dom is living as a fugitive in Panama working in an auto garage (what else?). Mia phones him with the tragic news of the car accident death of Leticia "Letty" Ortiz, played by Michelle Rodriguez, who could have phoned in her corpse appearance here. But the story keeps her spirit alive through the other cast members to drive the emotional angle of the film that later reveals a secret of human sacrifice

As Dom visits the site of the accident to find gun powder residue on the ground which indicates the car accident wasn't the result of a race. Brian also learns of the tragedy and discovers Letty was a driver for Braga.

After each cast member attends the burial from different and distant points, it's not long before Toretto and O'Connor clash on their agendas to avenge Letty's death and take down the elusive Braga. Dom manages to reach David Parks by dangling him outside a window for information as Brian arrives on the scene.

Brian brings Parks into FBI custody where the felon arranges for O'Connor to drive in an important race that Dom has already has infiltrated. Naturally, the FBI wants him to also perform his duty in bringing Dom to justice in the process.

The race is designed to determine "the best of the best" drivers that will work for Braga as chosen by his chieftain, Campos (John Ortiz) accompanied by his racing thug, Fenix Rose (Laz Alonso).

In between the action, there are some loose ends and personal issues tied up between the trio. These conflicts come from Brian who lied his way into their friendship. His one time love from Mia confronts him on whether or not he "is a good guy playing bad, or a bad guy trying to be good."

Director Justin Lin puts the pedal to the metal for the sleek look and action filled sequence that blends the real and CGI into an action filled ballet like sequence that fills the screen better than the cliché aspects of the script. Even though Vin Diesel and company provide good, familiar acting chemistry, it still isn't enough to overcome the potholes in the script.

PG-13; 107min. A Universal Pictures Release – Presented at selected theaters



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ON VIDEO

Compiled and Reviewed by David H. Schultz

DOUBT (**)** John Patrick Shanley makes a superior version of his Broadway stage play that involves power struggles over the assumption of guilt of child abuse from determined nun, Sister Aloysius (Meryl Streep) in another solid Oscar nominated performance. Sister Aloysius stands by her conviction rather than facts about toward the church's parish priest, Fr. Brendan Flynn (Phillip Seymour Hoffman).

Amy Adams plays a young nun caught in the middle while Viola Davis stars as the allegedly abused child's mother. Davis stands toe-to-toe in the one scene with Meryl Streep that earned her a best supporting actress Oscar nomination.

PG; 104 min.
Miramax Films Home Video

B E D T I M E
STORIES (*1/2) Adam Sandler stars in this uninspired Disney comedy/fantasy as a maintenance man trying to gain custody of a hotel business once owned by his father. Sandler's character, Skeeter, competes with opportunistic hotel clerk (Guy Pearce) while he baby-sits his sister's (Courtney Cox) children.

The kids make up outlandish incidents that somehow play out in Skeeter's real life.

PG; 99min. Walt Disney Home Video

NOT EASILY BROKEN*

(**1/2) An urban domestic drama derived from a T.D. Jakes book that involves personal ramifications and religious instability within a crumbling married couple. A struggling building contractor (Morris Chestnut) seems to have his priorities misplaced while his frustrated and neglected wife (Taraji P. Henson) seems to carry the family with her success as a realtor. A near fatal car accident reverses their roles of responsibility and the two suffer interference from a meddling mother (Jennifer Lewis).

PG-13; 100min. Sony Pictures Home Video

Also in release: Disney's "Tigger and Pooh and a Musical Too." Disney has unveiled a series of animation classics from their classic short films and highlight in three separate video collections: "Mickey and the Beanstalk", "The Prince and the Pauper" and "Three Little Pigs."

Also released is a special three disc collector's edition of 2007's best picture, "No Country for Old Men" that includes bonus interview segments.

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