



SRO Housing Corporation pursues its mission of community revitalization by providing clean, safe and affordable housing, managing public space and administering needed support services.

## *Name This Newsletter!*

### Did You Know?

- SRO Housing is the largest developer of single room occupancy housing west of the Mississippi.
- 70% of SRO Housing's units are subsidized.
- As of April 2004, 69 employees had been with the organization for five or more years.
- About 25% of employees are current or former residents.

Welcome to the first issue of SRO's new newsletter. We've had a lot of changes here at SRO in the last year: new leadership, new staff, a new building on-line, new construction projects began, new services, and now a new way for us to stay connected. This newsletter will be published quarterly. Issues will highlight current and upcoming events, people and things

we're proud of, and include important updates, information and other features. Submissions and suggestions are encouraged and welcomed.

Our first task is to *name the newsletter!*

Submit your suggestions to "Newsletter Contest" at Central Office.



The Executive Management Team will review all submissions and choose a winner.

**The author of the winning title will receive an American Express gift certificate worth \$50.00.**

The deadline for submissions is July 31, 2004.

*Good Luck!*

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## **SRO's Newest Project: The Lyndon Hotel**

The Lyndon Hotel, originally built in 1910 and currently a site of sub-standard housing, will be restored by SRO into 47 decent, safe and sanitary single room occupancy units; all with private kitchenettes and eight with private baths, plus two management units. The site, at 417 E. 7th Street, will be designed to include an elevator and handicap lift.

Each 300 square foot unit will have telephone and cable access. Thirty-three of the 47 units will be reserved for chronically homeless persons.

The project is now in escrow. Construction is planned to commence in July 2005. SRO anticipates that tenants will begin to move into the Lyndon Hotel in March 2006.



Lyndon Hotel  
417 E. 7th Street

## Building a Better Community — SRO is Founded



Wall Street - Our vision of community development.

Wall Street has 310 permanent housing units; almost 1/3 of all of SRO's permanent units.

Amid growing concern and media attention to the "homeless problem on Skid Row", Single Room Occupancy Housing Corporation was incorporated on February 14, 1984. Andy Raubeson, an ex-cop from Portland, was hired to salvage the single room occupancy hotels in Skid Row and create clean, safe and affordable housing. Originally built as cheap housing for railroad workers and other turn-of-the-century transients, the small, barren rooms, 80 to 100 square feet, were the only housing available for the poor in many cities.

The city's Community Redevelopment Agency and its Chairman, James Wood, formed SRO Housing with Andy as Executive Director and a six-member Board of Directors. The agency put up the \$9.6 million for the corporation to use to finance the first hotel purchases and the renovation of 600 units.

The Florence Hotel, SRO's first purchase, cost \$375,000. The building's 60 rooms were totally renovated and the site opened in 1986.

The Russ and Panama Hotels were bought in early 1985 for \$4

million and remained open during renovations.

Raubeson's goal was to make Skid Row a much different place. He envisioned that SRO's hotels would get a reputation as the best places on Skid Row. Their proximity to one another would form a small community that would humanize Skid Row.

Excerpted from "New Tactic Seeks to Upgrade Skid Row", by Kevin Roderick, Los Angeles Times, March 3, 1985.

## Milestones — Birthdays and Anniversaries

**Birthdays - July:** Ramon Becerra, McKinley Nelson II, Denice Walker, Rogelio Cabral, Thelma Heflin, Gregory Quinn, Daniel Nava, Russell Witmyer III, Dawn Jenkins, Claudia Preciado, Billy Parker. **August:** Claudine Mitchell, Jimmy Buie, Reynard King, Anabelle Mena, Marvin Luna, Danny Whitehead, Rita Barker, John Garcia, Danielle Noble, Joel Hamilton, Wynton Wallers, Cesar Hernandez-Benitez, Susan Gutierrez, Charles Wafer, Charles Brooks, Angelique Abbate. **September:** Johnnie Givens, Apollo Pharaoh, Robbie Vairo, Derrick Woo, Jesse Quirino, Michael Loudermilk, Rowe Roberts, Lillian Calamari, Jaime Rodriguez, Mohammed

Calamari, Jaime Rodriguez, Mohammed Miah, Dennis Alexander, Joseph Corcoran, Tyrone Black, Timothy Shine.

### Happy Birthday!

**Anniversaries — July:** McKinley Nelson III 7/26/1999, Edward Guerrero 7/10/2000, Reynard King 7/15/1999, Gary Lett 7/11/1988, Lillian Calamari 7/15/1992, Gabriel Negrete 7/5/1991, James McIntosh 7/10/2003. **August:** Derrick Fundburk 8/31/1987, Loanne Wu 8/11/2000, Leon Lewis 8/18/2000, Donald Jolly 8/30/1990, Pauline Bradley 8/8/1988, McKenelly Peeples 8/2/2001, Timothy Shine 8/16/2001, William Wise

8/2/2002, John Garcia 8/12/2002, Cheryl Bacot 8/4/2003, Valerie West 8/12/2003, Michelle Williams 8/18/2003, Luke Drummond 8/18/2003, Anita Nelson 8/25/2003. **September:** Barbara Nunley 9/28/1999, Darlene Berry 9/19/1988, Gregory Quinn 9/8/1989, Mira Loudermilk 9/15/1992, Danny Whitehead 9/27/2000, Deborah Martin 9/11/2002, Danielle Noble 9/17/2002, Blanche Pirtle 9/2/2003, Rosalind Irons-Harris 9/15/2003, Richard Blow 9/24/2003.

*Thank you for another year of service.*



## Milestones — Welcome and Farewell

*Welcome new SRO staff! The following people joined the agency between April 1 and June 30, 2004.*

Arlene Peterson, APS Coordinator; Claudia Preciado, Case Manager; Angelique Abbate, Case Manager; Billy Parker, Driver; Joseph Corcoran, Director of Planning and Housing Develop-

ment; Tyrone Black, Clerical Assistant; Jorge T. Ochoa, IT Tech. Support; Barbara Knox, Case Manager; Marshal Clark, Assistant Manager; Felicia Dickerson, Park Worker; Kimmie Hill, Janitor; Alma Sanchez, Housing Case Manager.

*Between April 1 and June 30, 2004 we said good-bye and good luck to:*

Larry Perkins, APS Coordinator; Carl Mosely, Sr., Janitor; Edith Lynn Resnik, Assistant Manager; Laura MacMorran, Project Manager; Ezra Bolts, Controller; Louis Robeson, Park Worker; Morgan Todd, Assistant Manager; Dorcas Cifuentes, Applications Assistant; Vera Fleishman, Director of Planning and Housing Development.

## Employee Spotlight — Darnell Guy, 19 Years and Counting

Darnell Guy, 43, was hired by SRO's first Executive Director, Andy Raubeson, in 1985. Darnell's first assignment was at the San Julian Homeless Shelter, a temporary shelter SRO built on the southwest corner of 5th and San Julian Streets. After about a year as Maintenance Worker and Janitor, Darnell transferred to SRO's Parks Department, where he has been ever since.

Having worked in both San Julian and Gladys parks, Darnell now spends most of his time at Gladys Park. His responsibilities include keeping alcohol and drugs out of the park, discouraging loitering around the park's perimeter and ensuring that the portable toilets are used appropriately. Darnell also takes care of the landscaping in the park and cuts the grass.

Darnell has been with SRO since the beginning and believes that he can be with the organization for "another 19 years." When asked what his favorite part of his job is, Darnell replies, "I like talking to people and being a listener. It makes people feel a little bit better when you hear what they've got to say and offer them a shoulder to cry on."



Darnell Guy

### Upcoming Event

#### SRO Annual Picnic

**Ladera Park**  
**6027 Ladera Park Ave, LA 90056**  
**Saturday, July 31, 2004**  
**8:00 a.m. — 6:00 p.m.**

Employees and their families are invited to a day of food, games and activities for children.

### Congratulations

*Congratulations to the following SRO employees, who earned professional development certificates between April 1 and June 30, 2004.*

Luke Drummond, Communication Skills Certificate; Alma Sanchez, Communication Skills Certificate; Barbara Knox, Communication Skills Certificate; Jorge Tavera-Ochoa, Communication Skills Certificate; Claudia Preciado, Communication

Skills Certificate; Kimmie Hill, Communication Skills Certificate; Marshal Clark, Communication Skills Certificate; Angelique Abbate, Communication Skills Certificate; Federico Lopez, Certificate in Substance Use/Abuse, HIV Case Management Recertification, HIV Case Management Supervisor Certification; Gabriel Negrete, HIV Case Management Certification; Cynthia Whaley, Certificate in Contemporary Methods to Treat Agitation and Aggression in Psychiatric Patients.

## Community Event — I Wish To Say

San Julian Park, April 21, 2004—Artist Sheryl Oring set up a portable public office complete with an antique typewriter and engaged people in the park in a discussion about politics and values, asking, "If I were the President of the United States, what would you say to me?" The visitor's reply resulted in a hand-typed

postcard addressed to the White House.

This unique art project was born out of Oring's belief in the right to free expression and her concern that not enough voices in our country are being heard. Oring will gather these messages throughout the country and present some of them in a public reading and art exhibition. She also intends to

publish some of the letters as a book, and in national and local media. Pictures and text from the project are available at [www.iwishtosay.org](http://www.iwishtosay.org)

Nineteen community members wrote to the President. Messages relayed personal experiences of violence and thoughts on the war in Iraq, homelessness, public benefits, child-support laws, jobs, immigration, national security, terrorism, re-

duction in funding for Section 8 programs, drug policy and services for Veterans.



Writing a Letter to the President



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Single Room Occupancy Housing Corporation (SRO Housing) was established in February 1984. It is a private, non-profit, community-based organization which is dedicated to building a healthy community for homeless and very low-income individuals in Los Angeles' Central City East neighborhood--more commonly known as "Skid Row". SRO Housing pursues its mission of community revitalization by providing clean, safe and affordable housing, managing public space, and administering needed social support services.

To achieve this goal, SRO Housing strives to preserve the existing turn-of-the-century, single-room-occupancy hotels in downtown Los Angeles. It purchases these hotels and completely renovates and refurbishes them as well as constructs new ones. SRO Housing supports efforts, within the public and private sectors, to secure adequate housing for homeless individuals throughout Los Angeles County. In addition to providing low-income housing, SRO provides the social support services needed to assist individuals toward accessing and remaining in independent living situations. Individuals in SRO housing are connected with a wide range of services including money management, job search, recovery programs, food services, case management, cultural socialization and recreation activities, mental health services, health screenings, etc. SRO Housing is committed to preserving and enhancing the dignity and self-respect of all persons who are in need of low-income housing and social support services.

**We're on the Web!**  
**[www.srohousing.org](http://www.srohousing.org)**

## Bits and Pieces....

A man was lost while driving through the country. As he tried to read a map, he accidentally drove off the road into a ditch. Though he wasn't injured, his car was stuck deep in the mud. So the man walked to a nearby farm to ask for help.

"Warwick can get you out of that ditch," said the farmer, pointing to an old mule standing in a field. The man looked at the haggardly mule and looked at the farmer who just stood there repeating, "Yep, old Warwick can do the job." The man figured he had nothing to lose. The two men and Warwick made their way back to the ditch.

The farmer hitched the mule to the

car. With a snap of the reins he shouted, "Pull, Fred! Pull, Jack! Pull, Ted! Pull, Warwick!" And the mule pulled the car from the ditch with very little effort.

The man was amazed. He thanked the farmer, patted the mule and asked, "Why did you call out all of those other names before you called Warwick?"

The farmer grinned and said, "Old Warwick is just about blind. As long as he believes he's part of a team, he doesn't mind pulling."

Adapted from *Some Folks Feel the Rain....Others Just Get Wet.*

James W. Moore, *Dimensions*

