12-1965

Munjoy Observer

Portland Renewal Authority

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Editorially Speaking

A MAGIC WAND

This year the Munjoy South rehabilitation program is going to show that over 100 formerly substandard structures became standard in 1965. This means that 100 property owners have completed rehabilitation of their property. Yet, at this moment about 25 properties could be re-classified standard if the owner would only correct some minor work still to be done. In these 25 housing inspection reports only minor repairs are necessary: a little plaster, putty to some windows, a new outlet, in a bedroom, repair of leaky plumbing, etc. The fact is that a few dollars would take care of these problems. PRA staff and the housing inspector return every month but the repairs have not yet been finished.

This is why PRA would like a magic wand for Christmas. Then the PRA rehabilitation staff could wave the wand over these 25 structures and low-and-behold the deficiencies would be corrected.

It is doubtful that Santa Claus will bring a magic wand to the PRA, and even if he did it is doubtful that it would be of any use. The trouble with magic is that it is a trick. Hard work is the only solution. PRA will have to be satisfied with plowing along its present course.

While Santa Claus won't bring PRA a magic wand Uncle Sam will bring new provisions of the rehabilitation program which should help correct these substandard structures which have dragged their heels because of many reasons. Generally the major reason is the owner doesn't think the repairs are essential; there-

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The Portland Renewal Authority has conferred with administrators of both Veterans' and State Welfare funds (Old Age Assistance, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Aid to the Disabled) in order to clarify the status of Relocation Adjustment Payments in the budgets of relocated families and elderly individuals of lower than average income.

The intent of the legislation making Relocation Adjustment Payments possible (Housing Act of 1964) was to improve living conditions and to compensate for the many additional difficulties and expenses not included in claims for moving costs. State Welfare Departments, however, had to consider such payments in the light of their over-all policies regarding extra income. The Maine Bureau of Social Welfare has ruled that these payments will be exempted as income in computing budgets. If desired, they may be used to increase capital reserves up to the maximum allowed; beyond that amount, the money may represent a temporary accumulation to be used in accordance with the purposes of the Housing Act. Workers in the Family Services division are asked to cooperate in promoting the purposes for which the Relocation Adjustment Payments are intended.

The Veterans Administration Adjudication Officer in Maine has ruled that Relocation Adjustment Payments from the Renewal Authority are not to be counted as income and need not be reported on income cards by recipients of VA checks.

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$14,359 In
Relocation Adjustment
Payments Made By PRA

The new relocation adjustment payment program has moved along with good speed reports Mr. William Cassidy, who has been assigned to expedite the program for PRA.

The new payment plan is an addition to the benefits provided for moving costs and direct loss of property previously provided by PRA. The program provides up to $500 to elderly individuals (over age 62) who are not a family member and families and for small businesses of $1,500 displaced by PRA from an urban renewal project area after January 27, 1964.

As of December 16, 1965 — 42 payments had been arranged by PRA and will mean a total payment of $14,359. A majority of the 42 claimants will receive the payment over a five-month period, payable jointly to the landlord and tenant. The final payment is made to the tenant directly, Mr. Cassidy said that by the end of December approximately 25 more persons will receive their first payment. Those who purchased houses are paid one payment. Tenants are paid over a five-month period.

In the Oct.-Nov. issue of the Observer PRA reported that at least 12 persons were eligible for payments, but the payments could not be made since they were living in housing which was substandard; that is, the apartment did not meet the minimum property standards of Portland’s Housing Code. In a few cases when the owner of the property and tenant were notified that payments could not be made until the substandard conditions were corrected the owner or tenant made improvements so as to permit PRA to pay the claim. For example:

Claim A. The claimant moved to a dwelling which was inspected by Mr. Thomas Joyce, housing inspector assigned to PRA’s Munjoy South program. There were several minor things wrong: faulty wiring, window needed replacing, and a number of broken panes and putty necessary. These violations of the housing code were repaired by the owner and the tenant. The cost was approximately $35. The payment to the claimant and landlord jointly for 5 months will be approximately $300.

Claim B. On inspection the housing inspector found a faulty fixture in the bedroom, loose and cracked plaster in a couple of rooms, and a leaky trap under the sink. Cost of repairs $25 to $35. The payment to the tenant and landlord jointly will (Continued on Page 3, Col. 2)

A Magic Wand
(Continued from Page 1, Col. 1)

fo re, he spends his money on other things, forgetting that a number of small repairs can add up to a major problem. These little things must be attended to. The new rehabilitation programs have passed the Congress and the money has been appropriated. PRA is hoping that the URA will have this low interest loan and outright grant program in operating order for 1966.

Originally rehabilitation was designed to meet the objections of critics of urban renewal who claimed that total clearance was unfair to the small property owner. As a counter program to meet these objections the rehabilitation program did not have any teeth. It was a voluntary program.

The first rehabilitation program in New England was Bayside Park; it combined clearance and rehabilitation. It required for its success that owners repair their property to the minimum code requirements of the City. Although the great majority of the property owners were willing to repair their property the problem was still one of economics. Bank loans were necessary, and low-income families often could not establish credit to secure loans. This posed a serious problem to the success of the program.

After an early stormy career the program was amended to permit FHA financing on more liberal provisions for urban renewal areas.

In spite of the early difficulties, rehabilitation has become a successful tool of urban renewal. In the four and one-half years ending June 30, 1965, the number of urban renewal projects involving rehabilitation increased from 170 to 475. More than half of these projects — 261 — were in the execution (under activity other than planning) stage. The number of dwelling units to be rehabilitated within projects in execution increased to nearly 140,000. Dwelling units with rehabilitation completed increased more than four-fold during the same period — from nearly 10,000 to 48,000.

“All of this was accomplished,” Commissioner William L. Slayton, URA, said, “with what we now recognize as inadequate financing aids, trained staff, and local mechanisms. Now, however, we have new tools to do the job…”

“Furthermore,” he continued “we now have authority to make grants to low income home owners, and 3 percent direct loans for rehabilitation to home owners and businesses unable to get loans on comparable terms. This should open up the rehabilitation market to a new segment of the population — those who need such assistance most and have been least able to find it. Its implications for upgrading our housing stock are considerable — and pleasant to contemplate.”

Joe Oliver, Housing Inspector assigned to the Munjoy South Project, looks over a rehabilitation project at 47 Eastern Promenade.
"Your P.T.A. Needs Your Support"

Everyone knows that the initials P.T.A. stand for "Parent Teacher Association," because since 1887 the P.T.A. has become a household word. Many commonplace names tend to lose their real meaning.

Over the years some misunderstandings and misgivings about P.T.A. units have developed. Staying away from meetings cannot possibly improve the atmosphere in which your unit operates, and cannot improve its efficiency.

The P.T.A. is not a social club where parents and teachers go to have a good time away from the children. It is not a place to corner your child's teacher in order to have him elaborate on your youngster's scholastic accomplishments. It is not a woman's club for gossip exchange.

If it isn't any of these things then what is a P.T.A? Each local P.T.A. unit is guided by principals and policies set up by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

Three of these illustrate the function of a P.T.A. unit: (1) Your P.T.A. unit shall be educational; (2) shall be noncommercial, nonsectarian and nonpartisan; (3) shall seek neither to direct the administrative activities of the school nor to control their policies.

The P.T.A. respects the position of the principal of the school. The major objective of the P.T.A. is "to develop and promote a deeper and more widespread understanding of the purpose, achievements, problems and needs of our public schools. Also, to encourage greater participation by parents, lay groups, and the general public in developing plans, programs and procedures for desirable improvements in our systems of public education, and to see that the needs of schools are met by stimulating proper action toward that end."

In order to attain these objectives and goals your P.T.A. needs you - mother and father! The Munjoy Hill P.T.A. needs your membership and active participation at P.T.A. meetings.

Join your P.T.A. at its next meeting held on the first Wednesday of each month at Marada Adams School!

Happy Holiday to all . . . .

The Executive Committee of the Munjoy Hill P.T.A.

Season's Greetings

The Board of Directors and the staff of the Portland Renewal Authority join in wishing a warm Season's Greetings to all the project residents and owners of property in Munjoy South.

This last year we have seen many improvements take place in Munjoy South. For many of these we are most grateful to the citizens who have improved their properties. We look forward to the new year with great expectations for further public and private improvements. We anticipate with special pleasure construction of town houses and garden apartments for middle income families in the clearance area of Munjoy South.
### Monday
- 9:11:45 A.M.
  North School Gym Classes
- 9:12 A.M.
  Well-Baby Clinic
- 12 P.M.
  Young Men’s Basketball
- 1:30 P.M.
  North School Gym Classes
- 1:45 A.M.
  Young Men’s Basketball
- 3:30 P.M.
  Senior Citizens
- 5:45 P.M.
  5th and 6th Grade Boys’ Basketball “A” League
- 7:45 P.M.
  Adult Basketball Program

### Tuesday
- 9:12 A.M.
  Well-Baby Clinic
- 9:11:45 A.M.
  North School Gym Classes
- 1:30 P.M.
  Young Men’s Basketball
- 1:45 A.M.
  Senior Citizens
- 3:45 P.M.
  5th and 6th Grade Boys’ Basketball “A” League
- 7:45 P.M.
  Gym Open
- 7:10 P.M.
  World War I Band

### Wednesday
- 9:11:45 A.M.
  North School Gym Classes
- 1:30 P.M.
  Young Men’s Basketball
- 3:30 P.M.
  4th, 5th and 6th Grade Girls
- 7:45 P.M.
  Rug Hooking Class
  for Adults
- 7:45 P.M.
  Fly Tying Class
  for Adults
- 7:45 P.M.
  Rug Braiding
- 7:45 P.M.
  Badminton Class
  for Adults

### Thursday
- 9:11:45 A.M.
  North School Gym Classes
- 1:30 P.M.
  Young Men’s Basketball
- 1:45 A.M.
  Senior Citizens
- 3:45 P.M.
  5th and 6th Grade Boys’ Basketball “A” League
- 7:45 P.M.
  Boys’ Teen-age (High School) Basketball Program

### Friday
- 9:12 A.M.
  Well-Baby Clinic
- 9:11:45 A.M.
  North School Gym Classes
- 3:45 P.M.
  5th and 6th Grade Boys’ Basketball “B” League
- 7:10 P.M.
  “Hi-Jay” Jr.
  High Dance and Games

### Saturday
- 9:11:45 A.M.
  Boys’ Jr. Fitness Club
- 9:11 A.M.
  Free Movies for Children
- 1:30 P.M.
  Teen-age Badminton Class
- 3:30 P.M.
  Jr. High Basketball
  for Girls
- 7:10 P.M.
  Senior Citizens
- 7:30-11 P.M.
  High School Dances

### AT OTHER SITES

#### Monday
- 7:10 P.M.
  Men’s Basketball Leagues
  (Jack Jr. and King Jr.)

#### Tuesday
- No Schedule

#### Wednesday
- 7:9 P.M.
  Boys’ Rifle Club
  (Police Station)
- 7:9 P.M.
  Women’s Health Class
  (Lyman Moore Jr.)

#### Thursday
- 7:10 P.M.
  Men’s Basketball Leagues
  (Jack Jr. and King Jr.)

#### Friday
- 7:10 P.M.
  Teen-age Dance
  (Reed School)

#### Saturday
- 9:11:30 A.M.
  5th and 6th Grade Basketball
  (D.H.S., Lyman Moore and King Jr.)
- 12:30 P.M.
  Free Children’s Movies at
  (Columbia Club)
- 9 A.M. - 10 P.M.
  3-Part Peaks Island Program

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