

With Help From Your Friends

For the past two years, with support from our canals and adjacent community, we have been pleased to support the work of the Venice Community Housing Corporation (VCHC) through our annual "Twilight Bridge Lighting and Holiday Party." Your generous gifts and money have made the holidays extra special for low-income residents and their children.

Much of the work of the VCHC revolves around housing. They have a building at 200 Lincoln Blvd., which they purchased in March 2000, consisting of 12 single and a one-bedroom rental unit, as well as two commercial units on the street level.

It currently is home to individuals who were homeless and had past problems with substance abuse, mental illness, and other disabilities. The first priority was renovating the interior of the building. The exterior of the building needed a great deal of work as well, but resources for that work were not available.

If you pass the building now it shines and the person responsible for that positive change is Doris Oliker, who wanted to make a meaningful contribution that would reflect the values that she and her husband shared. Doris is a long time canal resident and both a founding member of the "Voice of the Canals" and is on our Steering Committee.

Her donation was made in memory of her husband of fifty-five years, Jack Oliker, who passed away on January 1, 2005, surrounded by three generations of his family. As Doris says of Jack, "He died as he lived—with grace and dignity."

As Doris learned about the VCHC, the more she felt the organization fit in with Jack's values and the life she and Jack shared together. The VCHC first sparked Doris' interest when she saw the mosaic tile work on their Tabor Courts apartments on 4th Street, south of Rose. Doris came to the VCHC's "Open House" where she learned about their work with at-risk youth, their housing for formerly low income families, and their work to preserve the diversity of her own community.

Her visit to the VCHC's office on Rose Avenue also brought back memories of Doris' own days tutoring at-risk youth at the Milestone School, which happens to be where the present VCHC offices are located.

She had volunteered both as a teacher and as the director of the school from 1973 until it closed in 1984. In addition to the offices at this location, the VCHC offers at-risk students an education, provides a pre-school, and has a computer lab.

Doris assisted in the planning and architectural design stages of the project making good use of property



management and renovation experience that she and Jack possessed. The VCHC was also able to include YouthBuild participants in the renovation work, which furthered the Oliker's interest in helping young people learn skills and become successful.

Doris is proud that she and Jack were able to make such a positive impact on the Venice community. Their intention was to make success attainable to everyone who pursues it with commitment.

We Welcome You

"VOCAL" is the newsletter of the "Voice of the Canals," residents' organization, and is provided to all members and residents of the Venice Canals

For E-mail inquiries or to receive our VOCAL-Net e-mail service, which keeps you up-to-date on events in the canals:
vocalnet@pobox.com

VOC Website:
<http://web.mac.com/voc3>

General membership is open to all residents, 18 years of age and older. Support membership is open to all those living outside the canals. All memberships are \$15 per year.

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"VOCAL" Editors and Design/
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and Darryl DuFay



Upcoming
Events

"De-Tox Sunday," April 20th
and the "Annual General
Meeting," Tuesday, May 6th