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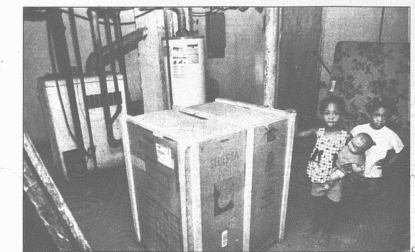
**Business  
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A1  
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ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

[www.roanoke.com](http://www.roanoke.com)

TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 1997

50C



Megan Coles, 4, (holding doll) and Derica Saunders, 3, stand beside the box that contained a new furnace in the basement of their great-grandmother's rented house. The box sat unopened for more than a year while the old furnace ran. Elise Saunders' heating bill up to \$350 a month. Landlord John Kepley installed the furnace shortly before a new tenant moved in last March.

## John Kepley: Legacy of controversy

Story by MARY BISHOP / Photos by STEPHANIE KLEIN-DAVIS  
THE ROANOKE TIMES

It's hard to say how many poor Roanoke families have lived in Charles Kepley's houses since the 1930s. Hundreds, at least. Probably thousands.

"I wouldn't say he had slums," said retired Roanoke Police Lt. Paul Adams, who knew Kepley's properties as a police officer in Northwest Roanoke. "His houses just weren't kept up the way they should have been."

Kepley was one of the biggest landlords in town. If a house needed repairs, "He'd squirm, but he'd do a little something more to appease. He kept them — not acceptable," Adams said, searching for the right word. "Livable, I guess."

Most of Kepley's rental houses were in Northwest Roanoke. Adams said black families whose pay was low at the railroad and other workplaces counted on Kepley for a cheap place to live.

Over time, Kepley owned about 100 rental properties, according to son John, who followed in his father's footsteps as both minister and landlord. By the mid-1980s, court records show, Charles Kepley's rental holdings were down to 51 houses.

Since 1985, 11 of Charles Kepley's houses have been found in violation of the city's building code. Nine were condemned.

Kepley died of cancer seven years ago. His company, Success Education Inc., which sold educational books door to door



John Kepley grew up in the rental or housing business and inherited many properties from his father, Charles Kepley, a Roanoke landlord for 60 years.

in rural areas, is out of business. But his rental properties remain all over the city — some of them boarded-up eyesores.

John Kepley, 63, owns or manages most of the property his father left behind. But John's rental inspection record is worse than his father's. Fifteen of his 33 houses have been cited for violations, and some were cited three or four times.

John Kepley helped dig his first waterline to one of his father's rental houses at age 12. He worked on his father's old houses as a student at Jefferson High School. Today, like his father, he is one of the biggest landlords in Roanoke's poor neighborhoods.

Kepley said there are two reasons he's in so much trouble with city inspectors: He challenged what he considers their heavy-handed tactics, and he organized landlords against the city's new rental inspection program. "I've been in and out of court in and out of court."

PLEASE SEE KEPELEY-A6



## THE INVISIBLE INNER CITY

Poverty, crime and decay in Roanoke's oldest neighborhoods

Admission of affair dimmed his star

## Ralston ends fight to lead Joint Chiefs

Air Force Gen. Joseph Ralston had mounted a last-ditch effort to save his chance to be chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Air Force Gen. Joseph Ralston gave up his fight to become the nation's top military officer on Monday. His candidacy doomed by the clamor over his admission that he had an adulterous affair years ago.

Ralston mounted a last-ditch effort on Capitol Hill trying to save his once-bright chance to be chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. But he took his name out of the running when it became apparent he had little backing.

In recent days, lawmakers and women's groups had accused the military of following a double standard — allowing an adulterous general to be promoted while hundreds of lower-ranking service members faced severe disciplinary action for similar actions.

"The attempt to have one standard for a four-star general and another for a first lieutenant was bound to fail," said Rep. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., referring to Air Force 1st Lt. Kelly Flinn, the B-52 pilot who recently resigned after being threatened with a court-martial.

Rep. Tillie Foster, R-Fla., a member of a congressional

delegation visiting military bases to study sexual harassment, fraternization and related issues, said that Ralston "didn't have a chance to be confirmed. It was going to be a media event every day."

Now, she said, the Pentagon must carry through with Defense Secretary William Cohen's proposal to study the rules governing social contact in the military and come up with specific policies "so that every member of the service, from the lowest level to the highest ranking leaders... is treated consistently."

President Clinton praised Ralston and said he was pleased that the general will stay on as vice chairman.

He also said he welcomed Cohen's decision to review the military's standards and procedures involving sexual conduct. "It is essential that our system is reasonable, consistent and fair for those who serve our country and that it is perceived to be by the American people," the president said.

Cohen, in a statement issued at the Pentagon, said Ralston was

PLEASE SEE RALSTON-A2

## FISHIN' IN THE RAIN



STEPHANIE KLEIN-DAVIS / THE ROANOKE TIMES  
MARK DEAN and his son, Michael, 4, of Roanoke fish for trout Monday afternoon at Lake Spring Park. The rain didn't bother them a bit. "It's the best day to do it," Dean said.

About 3,000 Roanoke voters must sign pari-mutuel petition

## Drive starts to put off-track betting on Roanoke ballot

Colonial Downs has permission to locate six betting parlors in Virginia. One of them might be in Roanoke or Martinsville.

By LAURENCE HAMMACK  
THE ROANOKE TIMES

Roanoke voters may get a chance to decide if the city should have an off-track betting parlor affiliated with a pari-mutuel horse track being built in New Kent County.

Herb Jones, director of shareholder and government relations for Colonial Downs, said Monday that Roanoke was

one of three areas being considered by the Roanoke Circuit for satellite betting locations.

If the plan goes through, race fans could go to a betting parlor in Roanoke to wager on as many as 30 horse races — at Colonial Downs and across the country — that would be simulcast to a bank of television monitors at the restaurant and bar.

But first, Roanoke voters would have to approve the proposal in a referendum that could take place as early as November.

The first step in what Jones called "a very complicated process" was taken

Friday, when papers were filed in Roanoke Circuit Court to start a petition drive that would put the issue on the ballot.

Organizers now must get the signatures of 5 percent of the city's registered voters — about 3,000 people — before the Nov. 4 ballot could carry the following question: "Shall pari-mutuel wagering be permitted in the city of Roanoke at satellite facilities?"

Roanoke was selected as a potential site because "it's the gateway to Southwest Virginia," Jones said. Saying many people in the region travel to West Virginia to bet on horse races, Jones said

Colonial Downs was looking for a location that would keep those fans in Southwest Virginia.

"There are lots of people who like to bet on horses and go to the race track," he said. "So it was a natural choice to start with Roanoke."

Colonial Downs — which plans to open its New Kent horse track Sept. 1 — is allowed by state law to have six off-track betting parlors across the state. Two already are open in Richmond and Chesapeake, a third is under construction in Hampton, and plans are under way for a fourth in Brunswick County, Jones said.

Roanoke, Martinsville and

Fredericksburg are being considered for the remaining two parlors, Jones said, and Colonial Downs has taken steps in all three localities to start petition drives for local referendums.

If a betting parlor petition were to be approved in a locality, Colonial Downs then would have to apply for a license from the Virginia Racing Commission.

There is no specific site being considered for a betting parlor in Roanoke, Jones said.

When it opens, Colonial Downs will become the first pari-mutuel race track in Virginia since voters approved legalized

PLEASE SEE BETTING-A2

# THE INVISIBLE INNER CITY

A SPECIAL REPORT

FROM A1

## Kepley

Dan Pollock, the city's housing development coordinator and supervisor of building inspections, says charges against Kepley predate his landlord auction by many years; inspection records back that up. Pollock says Kepley's troubles stem from the state of his properties and nothing else.

Ernie Saunders moved into a Kepley house at 2122 Melrose Ave. N.W. two years ago. Right away, the gas company warned her she needed a new furnace; the old one barely worked. Kepley bought a furnace in November 1995.

A year later, the furnace was still in Saunders' basement—in

**Wednesday JMI Properties was formed in the late 1980s to rent properties to poor tenants. It went bankrupt four years later, leaving dozens of condemned and vacant houses in the inner city.**



STEPHAN KLEIN-DAVIS / THE WASHINGTON TIMES

### OUR SERIES

**1** The lives of Roanoke's inner-city renters. Profiles of historic Day, Gimber and Turner houses. The bright of vacant houses.

**2** The business of landlordism and some of the people who are in it.

**3** What other cities do about decaying neighborhoods and what's being done—or not done—in Roanoke.

## WHY IT MATTERS

*'What's happened in Roanoke is, you have deteriorating real estate, aging population. With that comes a declining tax base and less interest in the school system and with that comes more drugs, more crime, more poverty. It even spills over into family problems, like abuse of children and spouses. It's just a terrible snowballing when all that happens.'*

WARNER DALHOUSIE

RETIRED CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF FIRST UNION NATIONAL BANK OF VIRGINIA

last summer, and family pictures lined a hall table.

Paint was peeling from the interior walls. Concrete steps leading into the back yard lacked a banister. At 92, Cox found the first step too steep to descend without a railing, so she rarely used the back door. A kitchen cabinet door had fallen off its hinges. The porch needed fixing. For the \$375 she paid each month, Cox expected repairs. "He'll promise you, and never come," she said.

"He claims to be a preacher," she said, shrugging her shoulders.

Kepley, a former Presbyterian with a master's degree in theology from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, was pastor of the interdenominational Wood of Zion Church in the 1980s. He still has a prison ministry and travels to Africa and Russia teaching Christians how to become pastors. He says he donates thousands of dollars each year to lig-wig wigs and educate children in Africa.

"People can't get mad at God, so they get mad at the minister," he said, when told that of some of his tenants this he "a hypocrite. Cox is still at 1200 Orange.

She was running errands with a friend on a recent morning, but her daughter, Leanne Jarmon, said repairs still haven't been completed. A kitchen cabinet door still hung from a broken hinge last week. Kepley said Cox's family broke the cabinet.

It took days of visits by city inspectors to get Kepley to repair his apartment at 519 Day Ave. S.W. The retired construction worker, 66, complained of cracked plaster walls, unupgraded Shroetter roof the hallway, and a front hall floor that swelled because, without gutters on the house, rainwater poured under the front door.

By last fall, Kepley had

painted inside, fixed the plaster and put in a new waterline. "He only did it because he had to," Ellis said. Kepley said he was good to Ellis, charging him \$100 for years until he raised the rent to \$225 last year.

The six days, this landlord said he worked as hard as he can. "I'm working six days a week at this."

His vacant houses have brought Kepley even more trouble than his occupied ones. He's spent years appealing the city's orders to demolish vacant houses—all the way to the state's Building Code Technical Review Board. He and other members of his family own at least 12 dilapidated vacant houses in Northwest, Southwest and Southeast Roanoke.

Typically, inspectors go to court and accuse Kepley of making no progress fixing up a vacant house. They order him to tear it down.

Then he and his attorney, J. Kenneth, claim that inspectors interfere with Kepley's repairs by imposing all sorts of regulations. In court last winter, Kenneth argued that Kepley has a right to repair a house "no matter how bad the house is, no matter how it's falling down."

In most court cases, Kepley has won more time to work on his houses. His house at 2024 Moorman Road N.W. is an example. Few houses in Roanoke look more deteriorated. Windows at the street and other wooden parts have rotted all over the boarded-up house. Top-story windows are broken out.

"I really don't like looking out my window at that wreck of a house," said Ze Harrison, whose family has lived across the street in a nearly identical—but well-maintained—house for 22 years. Her family said no one has lived at 2024 Moorman for at least 10 years. "My grandfather said it's been on fire twice."



STEPHAN KLEIN-DAVIS / THE WASHINGTON TIMES

2024 Moorman Road N.W. is one of at least 12 vacant houses that members of the Kepley family own in Roanoke. It has been condemned four times since 1986, but John Kepley has fought the city's order to demolish it.

Kepley said his father owned 2424 Moorman. "He didn't do anything with it, and he wouldn't let me do anything with it." It has been condemned four times since 1986.

The city ordered John Kepley to tear it down in 1994. Kepley appealed the order. He said that the house was "structurally sound and is on line to be remodeled and rented or sold." Kenneth, his lawyer, wrote a city board in 1994 that Kepley intended to remodel the house within a year and would not put up with the city's "dictatorial" practices.

Once again, the board gave Kepley more time.

Kepley told a reporter last month that he was working on the house, but the only visible change from a year ago was white paint applied to the porch columns and wood trim.

Kepley said he will fix up other dilapidated houses, too, like the one at 1301 Salm Ave. S.W. that neighbors say has been unoccupied for at least a decade. Last month, pigeons were flying in and out of broken attic windows. Attached to the front wall was a 6-month-old permit for Kepley to tear it down on the house. Kepley said he'd get the roof done this summer.

More than three years ago, he was ordered to tear down the house at 550 Day Ave. S.W. Instead, he fought the city's demolition order and boarded up the house, which neighbors said had beautiful woodwork inside. Kepley said a real estate agent was trying to sell it for him. Last month, a fire nearly destroyed the house and melted the paint on the

house next door. A fire marshal said it was arson.

The fire infuriated Kent Christman, a Realtor and an officer with the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation. Kepley should have fixed up the house, he said, or worked harder to sell it to someone who would. Last week, it was torn down.

"I feel somewhat indignant that he has fought the idea of regulation of properties and now he's a prima facie evidence of why we need to have something like that," Christman said.

Kepley says one reason many of his houses are in bad shape is that it took five years to settle his father's estate. Until it was settled two years ago, he said, he couldn't make repairs. Then, he said, work was delayed by bad weather in the winter of 1993-94. He said he's still trying to catch up.

His brother, retired Patrick Henry High School coach and guidance counselor Dick Kepley, said his father was sick almost a decade and unable to maintain his properties. "For 10 years," he said, "they just went downhill bad."

Before his father became ill, Dick Kepley said, the rental houses were in "pretty good shape. He had a crew of men who worked on them every day."

Dick Kepley said he long ago distanced himself from the rental business. He owned only one rental house until his father died, he said. Then he inherited a few houses, but he said most were being sold, given away or torn down. He asked that this story note that the family owns some well-maintained rental properties,

"He'll promise you and never come," John Kepley's tenant Mirna Cox said of her landlord. Her daughter said Kepley still hasn't fixed a kitchen cabinet door, painted, fixed the porch, nor has he built a banister on the concrete back steps at 1200 Orange Ave. N.W. Cox, 92, found the first step too steep to descend without a railing, so she rarely uses the back door.

### ON LINE

**Want to see the complete records on Roanoke's inner-city rental housing?** The Roanoke Times has compiled a database that shows building code violations in rental properties from 1992 to 1996. You can search the data by address or owner or quadrant at [www.roanoke.com/roelines](http://www.roanoke.com/roelines). Look under "The Invisible Inner City."

such as the Keplewwood Apartments at Maple Avenue and Jefferson Street in Old Southwest. "I don't want to be brought into it," Dick Kepley said of a news story. "I've taught all my life and coached all my life and tried to avoid negative criticism."

John Kepley, however, has waged right into controversy: He has brought a federal lawsuit against city building inspector Dave Hatchett last year for entering and videotaping a Kepley rental house without his permission. Dan Pollock, city housing coordinator, said Kepley dropped the case after the city wrote off its bill for cleaning up debris he left after demolishing a house in Northwest Roanoke.

He formed the Roanoke Property Investors Association to lobby against Roanoke's new rental inspection program. The group of 80 landlords—which Kepley says has grown to 100—defeated a few of the regulations, such as a requirement that landlords post a sticker at doorways of properties that fail inspections so prospective renters would have notice of the state of the property.

The landlords' intervention was needed, Kepley said. "You see, Dan Pollock was going to push this rental inspection program down our throats," Kepley said.

PLEASE SEE KEPLER/2

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

The Times wants to hear its readers' views about Roanoke's oldest downtown neighborhoods and what is happening to them. It is an interesting topic. We can call you at 951-4124 or fax to 951-7200. Or you can write to publish our readers' comments. Send us the address of your home. We'll send you a copy of the article. Poverty crime and decay in Roanoke's oldest neighborhoods.



## Witnesses describe postwar McVeigh as disillusioned

## Friends tell of a changed man

Timothy McVeigh had the making of greatness, fellow soldiers said, but those who knew him after the Gulf War say he changed.

**ANALYST'S PRESS**  
DENVER—Timothy McVeigh changed from a happy-go-lucky teenager and model soldier to a disillusioned veteran consumed with anger over the disaster at Waco, Texas, witnesses testified at his sentencing hearing Monday.

"I turn, confused," said McVeigh's longtime neighbor Richard Drazgys said in a choked voice. "There is a part of me that still remembers him from a little kid. And then there's a part that sees what everybody else sees on TV and gets angry. And I can't put the two together."

Drazgys, who lived four doors down from the McVeigh family in Poncha, N.Y., said that after McVeigh served in the Gulf War he disappeared for about a year, and then one day in 1983 sent him a videotape about the FBI's deadly 1993 raid on the Branch Davidian compound near Waco.

"It scared me," he said. "It scared me to the point that I turned to my wife and said, 'What the hell has he gotten into?'"

As McVeigh's attitudes tried to make jurors understand the human side of the convicted Oklahoma City bomber, they called a parade of persons Gulf comrades to tell how he was a compassionate "soldier's soldier" with a top-gun aim and a bright future.

But they did detect warning signs. Bradley Gunnar, a former U.S. Marine, said that after McVeigh was discharged from the military, he was a "top gun" and a "bright future."

But they did detect warning signs. Bradley Gunnar, a former U.S. Marine, said that after McVeigh was discharged from the military, he was a "top gun" and a "bright future."

McVeigh during the 1991 war against Iraq. "I just assumed he would go and do great things," McVeigh, who showed no emotion during last week's prosecution testimony about the horrors of the bombing, blushed, smiled and laughed as the parade of Army buddies sang his praises in attempt to spare him the death penalty.

Capt. Jesus Rodriguez, his close friend with medals, took the stand to describe McVeigh as "an outstanding soldier" who helped save a fellow soldier's life and was cool — and accurate — under every fire.

"He did what he was told," said Rodriguez, who chose McVeigh as his personal gunner. "He anticipated what had to be done, took pride in his work. He had a genuine care for how we looked in front of the company."

And, a grinning Rodriguez said, McVeigh liked strawberry Pop-Tarts, which he would get in the mail during the war and share with Rodriguez, to the ribbing of other soldiers who joked that McVeigh was kissing up to the boss.

Under cross-examination, those who testified acknowledged they hadn't seen McVeigh since at least 1992 and knew nothing about his life, thoughts or plans in the wake of prosecutors say is the latest year before the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

But they did detect warning signs. Bradley Gunnar, a former U.S. Marine, said that after McVeigh was discharged from the military, he was a "top gun" and a "bright future."

revolutionaries. He also described how McVeigh had an odd habit of taking battlefield pictures of dead Iraqis.

And one defense witness, McVeigh's childhood friend Vicki Hodge, hinted at McVeigh's changed personality when he left the Army in late 1991 after a failed effort to qualify for the elite Special Forces.

He seemed maybe just a little bit disillusioned," said Hodge, who hasn't seen McVeigh much since that time.

When she did know him — from fourth grade until they parted after high school — McVeigh was the class clown and a gangly teen who had the nickname "Chicken McVeigh," a play on Chicken McNuggets. It was later shortened by friends to just "Chicken."

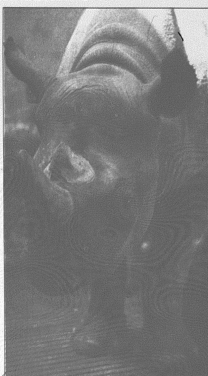
"I loved Tim," she said. "He's my second brother. And I still always will love him."

Dozens of witnesses were planned in the defense penalty phase to reveal McVeigh's human side and explain his anger over the government siege at Waco, which came exactly two years before the federal bombing that killed 168 people.

The same jury last week convicted McVeigh of murder and conspiracy in the blast is expected to begin deliberating this week whether he should die by injection or be sentenced to life in prison without parole.

The defense presentation must counter 2½ days of testimony from survivors describing their shattered lives and the portrayal of McVeigh as a cowardly angry bomber willing to kill children to avenge Waco and spark revolution.

## LOOKING FOR LOVE



**SPIKE, A BLACK RHINO**, lives at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo but is lonely. Biologists will head to South Africa next week to bring back a mate. Just 25 years ago, 65,000 black rhinos roamed free in Africa. Today only about 2,400 remain.

## Prom-pregnant mother not yet charged

## Official: Baby alive at birth

The 15-year-old New Jersey classmate said she didn't know pregnant.

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

**FREEHOLD, N.J.** — The music played on, and the young woman in the dark, loose-fitting dress danced with her pen pal, looking as if she were having lots of fun.

But in the marbled-tiles ladies' room, entering half a maintenance worker was making a horrible discovery: blood all over a stall, a newborn baby dead in a trash bin.

Authorities are awaiting test results before deciding whether to charge the 15-year-old rocker with killing her newborn son, and then returning to the dance floor at the Lacey Township High School prom Friday night as if nothing had happened.

The baby was alive during the birthing process, but died shortly after birth, according to the medical examiner. Drexler must determine.

The baby had expired independent of the mother."

Among other things, investigators are testing the toilet water to determine whether the full-term, 6-pound, 6-ounce baby was drowned.

"They're very upset," a woman answering the telephone at a Drexler residence in Forked River said. She said that she is Melissa's grandmother and that she hopes the teen is getting some help.

At the high school Monday, students said they had been unaware the 5-6-07, 130-pound girl was even pregnant.

She was seen when she returned from the ladies' room at the Garden Manor catering hall at Aberdeen Township that she had just given birth.

"She was sitting near me and my friends, talking and laughing. She was happy. She was happy," said Jamie Dries, 16. "She looked like nothing was wrong."

She even went up to the disc jockey to ask for a song.

Even the girl's prom date didn't know she was pregnant and he was the one who had happened, but he told authorities he is probably the father, according to Honecker. Officials would not release his name.

Although several people had heard strange noises coming from a restroom stall, no one apparently realized what had happened until several prom-goers alerted the staff that blood was on the floor. When a maintenance worker opened the stall, she found more blood spattered on the walls and toilet.

Teachers and counselors, told by other students that a woman in a black dress had been in the restroom, found the blood. They then, approached the girl, but she denied any involvement.

The dead baby was found in a trash can a few stalls away, school officials approached the girl again and this time she admitted to the birth. Honecker said.

Honecker said that shortly after arriving at the prom, the girl had gone into the restroom with a friend and decided to fix her makeup — then stayed behind. At the time her friend returned to the prom, she had been about a half-hour later, the girl had managed to give birth, wrap the body in a trash can liner and dump it in a stall down the hall and it came taken up, Honecker said.

The girl was taken to a hospital, but she was later removed. Efforts by the high school health teacher and ambulance personnel to revive the newborn failed, and he was declared dead in the hospital about two hours later.

## Investigators release photos, letter denouncing 'sodomites'

## Feds increasingly sure 3 blasts linked

Officials are "all but positive" that Atlanta abortion clinic and gay bar bombings are linked, and now think the Olympic Park blast is related.

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

ATLANTA — Nearly a year after the Olympic Park bombing, federal investigators said Monday they are increasingly confident the attack is connected to explosions at an Atlanta gay nightclub and an abortion clinic.

The conclusion, based on undisclosed forensic evidence, was announced as investigators made yet another plea for tips, releasing two detailed composite sketches of two men believed to have been seen outside the abortion clinic along with a new photo showing a hazy figure sitting on the Olympic Park bench where that bomb was placed.

The letter also released a letter claiming responsibility for the Jan. 16 clinic blast and the Feb. 21 nightclub bombing. The letter is scrawled in children block letters denouncing "sodomites" and those who commit "ungodly perversion."

Officials hope the new information will prompt tips that could help them solve the July 27 bombing at Centennial Olympic Park, which killed two people and injured more than 100, and the Olympic bombing and the two that



Bystanders protect themselves seconds after a second explosion (left) detonated outside an Atlanta abortion clinic, Jan. 16.

last explosions, which injured 12.

"It kind of would be fair to say we're all in the pool," he said. "We're linked, and we have increasing confidence that the Centennial Park bombing is part of this," said Jack Kilborn, agent in charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms in Atlanta.

As a result, investigators have combined their three separate investigations and extended the \$500,000 Olympic bombing from 10 to cover the two other blasts.

At the same time, investigators acknowledged there are significant differences between the Olympic bombing and the two that

followed.

Black powder was used in the Olympic bomb, while the others used dynamite. Also, the clinic and nightclub bombings each featured second bombs that authorities believe were intended to kill or injure law enforcement officers sent to the scene.

There is a significant difference," Kilborn said. "However, there's also the fact that in one city in the short span of eight months, we've had three anti-personnel bombs about which it could be argued that law enforcement was at least a secondary target."

The sketches, which appeared to be computer-generated, were both of men identified as having been seen near the abortion clinic the night before the attack and the morning the bombs exploded. One man had a full beard.

Though the letter sent to news organizations says days after the blast makes no mention of the Olympic attack, the omission hasn't dissuaded investigators from believing the bombings may be linked.

"He may have tried to avoid that responsibility for whatever reason," said Jack Daubert, the FBI investigator leading the bombing investigation. "He does all these things that lead us to believe he has some knowledge of the bombings" in January and February.

In his written in black capital letters says a group called the Army of God is responsible for both the abortion clinic blast and the Olympic bombing. The group was set to avenge "the murder of 3.5 million children every year," while the nightclub bombing targeted "sodomites."

## Furlough for King assassin denied

## Ray loses legal request for liver transplant trip

Martin Luther King's convicted killer hoped to leave his Tennessee prison for a possible liver transplant in Pittsburgh.

**ANALYST'S PRESS**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — An alleged James Earl Ray, in prison for the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., was denied permission Monday to go to Pittsburgh in search of a liver transplant.

Irvin Kilcrease, a Chancery Court judge, said Ray's lawyers failed to give a legal reason why the 69-year-old inmate should be moved to the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Willie Pepper, Ray's chief lawyer, said he will appeal without delay.

"Time is critical. He's dying," Pepper said.

Ray received a 99-year

sentence after confessing to King's assassination in Memphis in 1968. He remained in his confinement since immediately and has been trying for years to win a trial.

Ray recently won permission to have tests done on the liver that prosecutors say was the murder weapon. The results are expected this month.

State lawyers argued that Ray's request to go to Pittsburgh didn't have to be honored. Tennessee grants inmates out-of-state furloughs only to visit sick relatives or to attend the funeral of a family member. State Solicitor General Michael Moore said.

He added that Tennessee cannot compel another state to accept Ray or provide security for him.

King's family supports Ray's bid for a trial, and King's son, Dexter, urged Kilcrease in a letter to grant the request for a trip to Pittsburgh.

## Abortion foes claim law discriminates

## High court rejects challenge to law protecting clinic access

In another ruling, the court agreed to decide whether same-sex workplace harassment violates federal law.

**ANALYST'S PRESS**

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Monday rejected a challenge by anti-abortion protesters to a federal law protecting access to abortion clinics.

The court, without comment, turned away the protesters' argument that the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act discriminates against people who oppose abortion. Congress exceeded its authority in enacting the law, the court contended.

The 1994 law bans the use of force, threats or blockades to interfere with access to reproductive health care, including abortions. Several federal appeals courts have upheld the law, and in each case the Supreme Court has declined to review those rulings.

numerous violent incidents at abortion clinics across the nation involving bombings, arson, clinic invasions and murder.

In another ruling Monday, the court agreed to decide whether same-sex harassment in employment violates federal law, focusing on the case of an oil rig rouster about being raped by his male supervisor.

The justices' decision in the Louisiana case, expected in 1998, will resolve conflicting rulings about federal appeals courts over the reach of a federal law that bans on-the-job sex discrimination.

Joseph Oncale said he was sexually pursued and harassed by his boss at a Gulf of Mexico oil rig in 1991.

Lower courts said he could not sue under the federal law known as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which bans sexual discrimination and harassment in employment. They said same-sex harassment isn't covered by the law.

FROM A6  
Kepley

Kepley is highly critical of Pollock, the city's housing development coordinator. "He told me in front of me a million dollars," he said. "John, if the City Council gave me a million dollars, I'd take a bulldozer and tear down all those houses I said. 'Don't let City Council give me a million dollars. I'd fix them up and give people a nice place to live.'"

Pollock said some houses neglected for years do need to come down. "John and I have a different view of opinion about when a building becomes infeasible for renovation."

Pollock said he does not sign off on Kepley for aggressive code enforcement, as Kepley claims. "He tells that at about

Many Bishop can be reached at 851-3360 or maryl@monks.com

# THE ROANOKE TIMES

Business AB  
Classified C1  
Deaths C2  
Local B1  
Sports B2

PARTLY  
SUNNY

High near 85.  
Low to 60.  
Details on A2.

ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

www.roanoke.com

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11, 1997

501

Rink will draw up to 450,000 visitors a year, developers say

## Ice park to heat up downtown businesses

The regulation 85-by-200-foot rink will include concession stands, arcade and spectator seating.

By MEGAN SCHMIDT  
THE ROANOKE TIMES

Building Dorothy Hamill and Wayne Gretzky take note: One more year, and you'll have all the ice time you need to perfect your double axel and slap shots.

By next fall, the Roanoke Ice Park, created by the same people

who built Charlottesville's downtown ice rink, will be open for business, the developers said Tuesday.

The ice rink, a project of D&R Development, will go up at Church Avenue and Williamson Road near the City Market, where a parking lot now sits.

"We don't like to be sitting out in a field," said Colin Ralph, half of the Charlottesville development company. He and partner Lee Danielson wanted a site near

Roanoke's downtown entertainment and dining district, he said, so the ice park and existing businesses could feed off each other.

The rink, which will be open until 11 p.m. or midnight several nights a week, will be a boon for downtown restaurants and may even persuade some merchants to stay open later, predicted Matthew Kennell, executive director of Downtown Roanoke Inc.

The \$4 million project will PLEASE SEE ICE PARK/AB



THE ROANOKE TIMES

Defeats Fielder 3,162 to 1,427

## Holland wins Democratic primary vote

Sherman Holland captured nearly 70 percent of his party's vote for Roanoke commissioner of revenue.

By JOEL TURNER  
THE ROANOKE TIMES

In his first campaign for elected office, Democrat Sherman Holland trounced his boss Tuesday by building huge margins in black neighborhoods to capture his party's nomination for Roanoke commissioner of revenue.

Holland, a city business license inspector and auditor, defeated Marsh Compton Fielder by 3,162 to 1,427 — winning nearly 70 percent of the vote in a light turnout in the primary election.

Only 10 percent of the city's registered voters cast ballots in the Democratic contest that concluded with the Republican primary for state attorney general.

Holland, 43, ran strongest in predominantly black and racially mixed neighborhoods. But he also showed strength in other sections of the city. He led in the affluent Lee-Hi precinct and ran even with Fielder in South Roanoke. He also ran first in two Williamson Road riding places.

Fielder, seeking his second term, carried 19 precincts and Holland led in 13, but her victory



"This was an election about fair taxes and protecting taxpayers' rights," Sherman Holland told cheering supporters Tuesday at his victory celebration.

margins was small in many neighborhoods where less than 10 percent of the voters went to the polls. Twenty percent to 30 percent of the voters cast ballots in predominantly black neighborhoods.

Holland, who has worked in the commissioner's office since 1981, built a margin of nearly 1,500 in seven precincts in Northwest Roanoke to ensure his victory. He won more than 90 percent

PLEASE SEE HOLLAND/AB



This duplex on Essex Avenue Northwest was less than 5 years old when this photo was taken in 1996. The partnership that built it, IMJ Properties, filed for bankruptcy in 1992. Most of its buildings were sold and repaired. This building, one of six on the block, was repaired by its current owner, Guy Sparks, and is being rented.

## IMJ Properties: Building boom bust

Story by S.D. HARRINGTON / Photos by STEPHANIE KLEIN-DAVIS

THE ROANOKE TIMES

Forlorn Thornhill usually complains when she sees a house being built that doesn't fit in with the old houses in her Northwest Roanoke neighborhood.

But the past president of the Northwest Neighborhood Environmental Organization didn't think to question a developer who built a duplex about six years ago on Loudon Avenue Northwest.

"I thought he was building a garage," she said.

From 1991 to 1993, a low-income housing partnership called IMJ Properties built nearly 30 of the identical white box-shaped duplexes along Northwest Roanoke streets. Some of the vinyl-sided structures were built between old houses with big porches and gables.

Building officials say the duplexes met the minimum building code, but community leaders say the developers were more interested in making money than in building homes that fit into the neighborhood.

"They threw those boxes straight up. They didn't think anything about" the neighborhood, said Estelle McCadden, president of the Melrose/Hughley Neighborhood Forum.

IMJ filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in December 1992, a little more than four years after Anthony Byrd and Bobby Doyle formed the partnership. IMJ owned about 50 rental units in addition to the new duplexes, according to U.S. Bankruptcy Court records.

Creditors, including five area banks, had more than \$3 million in claims against the partnership.

### OUR SERIES

1. The lines of Roanoke's inner-city renters. Profiles of historic Day, Gilmer and Tazewell avenues. The blight of vacant houses.
2. The business of land-lording and some of the people who own it.
3. Decaying neighborhoods and what's being done — or not done — in Roanoke.

From then on, the properties declined.

From 1993 to 1995, properties belonging to IMJ and an affiliated company, Mid-South Management Inc., were cited 28 times for building code violations.

By the end of 1994, more than half of the duplexes had been condemned by city building inspectors.

Some of the duplexes sat vacant for more than a year. Some were constantly being broken into, said Dan Pollock, the city's housing development coordinator. Vinyl siding was peeling off. Graffiti marred the interior walls.

"They didn't have much going for them," Pollock said.

In 1993, the Virginia Housing Development Authority canceled nearly \$150,000 in federal tax credits it had awarded for the housing projects because the rental units weren't being maintained. IMJ had been eligible for more than \$1 million in tax credits over a 10-year period under the program.

Doyle, a IMJ partner, said he couldn't recall anything specific that led to the company's failure. He said he was less

## THE INVISIBLE INNER CITY

Poverty, crime and decay in Roanoke's oldest neighborhoods



Mary Earley makes his way through the crowd Tuesday as he heads to the podium for his acceptance speech in Chesapeake as supporter Barbara Haynes (right) and his 12-year-old son Justin (left) look on.

## Less than 5 percent of voters show up Earley is GOP's pick for attorney general

The nominee will face Democrat Bill Dolan of Arlington in the Nov. 4 general election.

By WARREN FISKE  
THE ROANOKE TIMES

State Sen. Mark Earley of Chesapeake bested three opponents in the Republican primary for attorney general Tuesday, backed by a network of Christian conservative voters who cast ballots on a day when few others did.

Less than 5 percent of the state's 3.4 million registered voters participated in the primary to fill out the Republican ticket headed by Jim Gilmore for governor and John Hargis for lieutenant governor.

Earley, a former missionary who spearheaded a successful effort this year to require parental notification for teenagers' abortions, will face Democrat Bill Dolan of Arlington in the Nov. 4 general election.

Earley won with only 36 percent of the tally. He was trailed by

### PRIMARY AT A GLANCE

REPUBLICAN PRIMARY FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL			
✓ Mark Earley	66,023	96%	
Jerry Kilgore	41,455	25%	
Ken Stolle	35,062	21%	
Gil Davis	31,704	19%	
Winner faces Democrat Bill Dolan in November			

### DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY FOR ROANOKE COMMISSIONER OF REVENUE

✓ Sherman Holland	3,162	69%	
Marsh Compton Fielder	1,427	31%	
Winner faces Republican Guy Byrd in November			

THE ROANOKE TIMES

Jerry Kilgore, a former secretary of public safety, 25 percent; state Sen. Ken Stolle of Virginia Beach, 21 percent; and Gil Davis, a Northern Virginia lawyer, 19 percent.

PLEASE SEE EARLEY/AB

FROM A1

JMJ

involved with MJM than his partner. Byrd could not be located for this story.

Doyle said he wasn't involved with management of the properties. He said that was left to another corporation, Mid-South Management Inc., run by Byrd and Gary Peck, a former First Security Bank president who was convicted in 1995 of an unrelated money-laundering charge. Mid-South was dissolved by the owners in September 1995, according to the State Corporation Commission.

As for construction of the duplexes, Doyle says they were never finished. MJM built the duplexes to meet the minimum building code, he said. Any

#### THE LANDLORDS

**JMJ Properties and Mid-South Management Inc.**

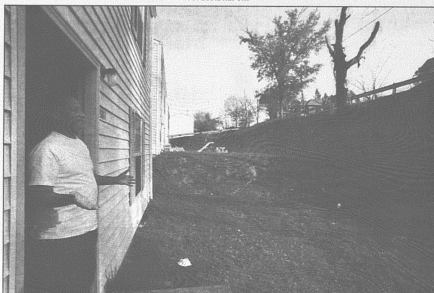
**Officers:** Anthony Byrd and Betsy Doyle, MJM; Byrd and Gary Peck, Mid-South

**Total properties owned in Roanoke's inner-city neighborhoods:** 54  
**Percent cited:** 52%  
**Total citations:** 32  
**Criminal charges:** 2

- MJM Properties filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 1992.
- Mid-South Management Inc. was dissolved in September 1995.

SOURCES: Roanoke City Housing Department, Roanoke General District Court records and the State Corporation Commission

THE ROANOKE TIMES



Elgin Robertson looks in dismay at the view from his front door on the 2000 block of Essex Avenue Northwest. MJM Properties, now defunct, built the row of duplexes facing a hill.

Sparks. Both landlords repaired and are reverting the units. "They got so busy building. The hardest part in rental housing is taking care of your tenants" and maintaining the units, McGhee said.

At the bottom of a steep hill on the 2000 block of Essex Avenue Northwest, MJM built a row of six cookie-cutter named duplexes. The company wanted the project Essex Avenue Townhouses.

City officials have criticized the project and at one point wanted to demolish the duplexes.

#### WHO TO CALL

Need help? Information?

Want to get involved?

- Roanoke Housing Department, 853-1208 or 853-2222
- Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley, 244-2080
- Roanoke Neighborhood Partnership, 345-8250
- Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority, 983-9281
- Blue Ridge Housing Development Corp., 774-7408

#### WHY IT MATTERS

*A community's vibrancy needs to be thorough, not limited to one area. 'Like if you have a house, do you keep one room clean and not pay any attention to the other rooms?'*

BETH DOUGHTY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ROANOKE VALLEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Dan Pollock, the city's housing development coordinator, said MJM built too many units for the topography. All of the duplexes were built facing the hill. The front porches are slabs of concrete. And the parking lot behind the hill is gravel.

Lindsey Martin, president of the Loudoun/Melrose Neighborhood Organization, said MJM didn't properly screen tenants. He said there were drug deals and disturbances by some tenants. Between the years the duplexes were built and vacated, police

logged nine drug offenses, eight assaults, eight disorders and seven domestic disorders in the 2000 block of Essex Avenue. However, the newspaper was unable to determine whether the offenses were by people who lived on the hill or in the duplexes.

Martin said tenants also tore up the properties. "They desecrated those places," he said of the tenants. "It didn't help the neighborhood at all. They should have never been built."

Neighborhood leaders, including Martin, McCadden and

Thornhill, went to city officials for help trying to stop MJM's construction blitz. But there was little the city could do initially, said John Marlin, Roanoke's chief of community planning.

The city could regulate architectural design only in historical districts and the Northwest neighborhoods had no such designation.

So Marlin, City Attorney William Bittling and the neighborhood leaders traveled to Richmond to ask the General Assembly for authority to regulate the

#### ON LINE

**Want to see the complete records on Roanoke's inner-city rental housing?**

The Roanoke Times has created a database that shows building code violations in rental properties from 1982 to 1996.

You can search the data by address or owner or quadrant.

[www.roanoke.com/roostimes](http://www.roanoke.com/roostimes)

Look under "The Invisible Inner City."

**Thursday: Landlord Bob Fetzer did high-quality renovations of old homes, but few others joined him.**

The city is in the final stages of creating the guidelines, Marlies said.

McGhee, who owns and rents out eight of the MJM duplexes, defends their construction.

While he acknowledges that MJM didn't add some cosmetic features such as porches and shrubs, he said the duplexes did meet the building code.

"Cosmetically, some things should have been added," McGhee said. "But everyone's got to remember — these were going to be low-income."

"I drive down the neighborhood and say, 'Show me something better,'" he said. "It's probably better than anything on the street now."

But the rental units continue

#### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

The Times wants to hear its readers' views about Roanoke's oldest downtown neighborhood and what is happening to them. If you have something you'd like to say, call in late at 981-0100 and go to mailbox 7824.

Our plan is to publish some reader comments during the course of our series. The Invisible Inner City. Poverty, crime and decay in Roanoke's oldest neighborhoods.

to be a sore spot for Northwest Roanoke neighborhood activists.

"It's just yavens in the neighborhood," said McCadden, president of the Melrose/Rugby Neighborhood Forum. "I think it's the pits."

"If we had known... we would have stopped that kind of housing."

Thornhill, the former president of the Northwest Neighborhood Environmental Organization, said the duplexes were built only to minimum standards, no one cares about them.

"Anything you throw up in a hurry just to make money, it doesn't last no time no way," he said.

S.D. Harrington can be reached at 981-3238 or [sharrington@roanoke.com](mailto:sharrington@roanoke.com)

By 2005, the collision probably will begin to glow in visible light

## Astronomers catch the wave of a supernova

The supernova that blew up in 1987 is giving modern astronomers the first opportunity to verify observations made in ancient China.

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — A wave of debris is racing from the brightest exploding star ever observed by modern telescopes and will create a renewed point of light in the southern skies, astronomers expect.

Ten years after it blew up, astronomers say that a high-speed ripple of material from supernova 1987A is colliding with a ring of gas that the star expelled thousands of years ago. The gas is expected to soon glow at thousands of degrees, causing a faint burst of light that will be visible on Earth in 2005.

George Sonneborn of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., said the wave of energy from the exploded star is now invisible, but it is beginning to shine brightly in ultraviolet emissions detected by instruments on the Hubble Space Telescope.

By 2005, Sonneborn said Monday at a meeting of the American Astronomical Society, the immense energy of the collision probably will begin to glow in visible light.

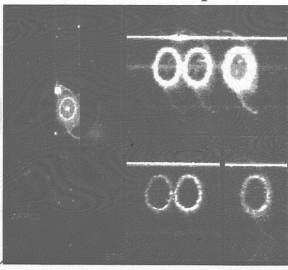
"This is consistent with what the Chinese reported in ancient times," said Sonneborn. He said astronomers then recorded sighting an exploding star that shined brightly, dimmed then suddenly intensified again about a decade later.

The supernova that blew up in 1987 is giving modern astronomers the first opportunity to verify those ancient observations and to collect photos as it happens.

"It is a rare opportunity to see these processes at work within our lifetime," said Sonneborn.

Exploding stars are thought to play a key role in the chemistry of the universe and of life itself. Basic elements created in the final stages of a star's life are blasted out and spread when the star explodes. It is thought that all heavy elements, including the atoms of our bodies, originated in stars.

Sonneborn said that it is believed the star, in the final stages of its life, turned into a blue giant that about 20,000 years ago expelled a



ASSOCIATED PRESS

This is a set of four photos taken by the Hubble Space Telescope showing a light-year-wide ring of glowing gas around supernova 1987A. The STIS long-slit spectrograph, left, shows the entire ring system, dissecting its light and producing an image of the ring in each of its component colors. The rings are enhanced by scientists using different colors to represent light from specific elements in the ring's gases, including oxygen (single green ring), nitrogen and hydrogen (triple orange ring) and sulfur (double red ring).

ring of gas that moved slowly outward. Earlier Hubble photos captured views of this gas ring, a glowing circle around the supernova.

When the star exploded inside the gas ring, it sent a wave of debris outward at 33 million miles an hour, said Sonneborn. Now the energy wave is catching up with the ring of gas and beginning to set it aglow.

Astronomers have long theorized about the existence of that wave from a supernova, but

only now has it been possible to study it, said Sonneborn.

"The very tenuous outer layers of the debris became invisible a few days after the explosion and have remained so until now when they were detected by Hubble with the ultraviolet detectors," he said.

New instruments on Hubble have also detected the collision of two galaxies and the birth of new stars.

The challenge now is to learn why

## Astronomer: Black holes too uniform for chance

"Nature is stamping out these things at seven solar masses," says Charles Bailly of Yale University.

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — Nature may make black holes with cookie-cutter precision, according to an astronomer who has found such uniformity in these mysterious objects that he suggests their size may be controlled by some basic law of physics.

Yale University astronomer Charles Bailly said Tuesday that measurements of the mass of the known stellar black holes show that all but one of them are seven times the size of the sun. "Nature is stamping out these things at seven solar masses, for some reason," he said. "What you would expect is a broad distribution in sizes. That's what makes this such a surprising result."

Bailly gave a report on the black-hole findings at a national meeting of the American Astronomical Society.

All the black holes analyzed by the Yale team were formed when stars burned up their nuclear fuel and then exploded as supernovae.

Bailly said the supernovae was more than eight solar masses, and some perhaps twice that size, at the moment of explosion. But after the debris collapsed from the blowup, they settled into black holes seven times the mass of the sun.

"Seven solar masses seems to be some sort of magic number for these things," he said.

Bailly and his team determined the size of all seven of the

known stellar black holes and there was only one exception to the rule of seven. That one was about 14 solar masses.

The size of the black holes, said Bailly, is too uniform to be a matter of chance and he suggested that there could be some law of nature that results in the "magic number."

Stellar black holes are formed from remnants of a supernova. The dying star collapses into a single point of density that creates such a powerful gravitational field that nothing, not even light, can escape. Since it gives out no light, it is invisible, giving the object its name.

Each of the stellar black holes is orbited by a companion star, usually several times the size of the sun. These stars are being swallowed, bit by bit, by the black hole.

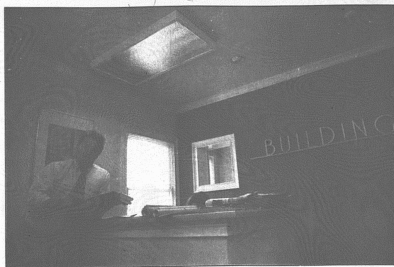
Billions of tons of matter stream from the companion star constantly. As it approaches the center of the black hole, the matter heats to millions of degrees and sends beams of X-rays streaming through the heavens.

Bailly said that as the companion star is drawn inward, its orbital speed up and some are now whipping around the black hole in two days or less.

The sizes of the black holes were determined by measuring the distance and mass of the companion stars.

Now, said Bailly, astronomers need to figure out why most of the black holes seemed to be seven times the mass of the sun.

"This new finding will send astrophysicists back to their supernova computer models to try to figure out why," he said.



Bob Fetzer, owner of Building Specialists, Inc., a company that builds and restores houses, in the front room of his office on Day Avenue Southwest.

## Bob Fetzer: Alone in the inner city

See for the Record June 13  
Story by MARY BISHOP / Photos by STEPHANIE KLEIN-DAVIS

THE ROANOKE TIMES

Last February, Bob Fetzer, downtown landlord and developer, was trying to rent an apartment to a woman who was staying in a homeless shelter. But she didn't speak English, and neither the shelter nor the Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority, where she obtained a federal certificate for rental assistance, could give Fetzer enough information to do a background check. The woman was about to lose a decent place to live. It was the same-old same-old to Fetzer, who has complained for years about snafus like this.

"We need a housing clearinghouse," he said, a reliable way for landlords and poor tenants to find each other. Roanoke's housing needs a lot of things, the way Fetzer sees it. For more than 10 years he has sounded the alarm about the loss of handsome old housing stock and its replacement with downtown parking lots. He keeps up with so-called "come-back" cities that are saving downtown neighborhoods around the United States.

As former president of the Roanoke Regional Housing Network and the Roanoke Valley Regional Homebuilders, Fetzer has brought some of the country's most progressive urban planners and thinkers to town. Yet he doesn't see a lot being done about Roanoke's decaying neighborhoods.

Inside 917 Marshall Ave. S.W., Fetzer showed off the smooth hardwood floors, the 8-foot ceilings, the French doors and the new kitchen in one of his apartments a few months ago.

### OUR SERIES

1. The lives of Roanoke's inner-city renters. Profiles of historic Day, Girard and Tazewell avenues. The plight of vacant houses.
2. The business of landlord and some of the people who are in it.
3. What other cities do about decaying neighborhoods and what's being done — or not done — in Roanoke.

The place rents for \$300 — a good deal anywhere in Old Southwest, much less in a sticky restored old house like 917. But the address is a turnoff.

"We tell them it's on Marshall," Fetzer says, "and click." Fetzer says, "and click." Fetzer is a trendsetter about the trend. He thought other developers would be right behind him when he poured \$1.6 million into two office buildings on Day Avenue and eight old houses on Campbell, Marshall and Patterson avenues in the West End neighborhood, a short walk west from downtown. He rebuilt porches and painted the houses pink, green and yellow. "He has kind of set an example if you're doing renovation of housing," downtown architect Don Harwood says. "Bob seems to go beyond just the granting out of the projects into what it could be."

But after a decade, Fetzer is almost alone in West End. PLEASE SEE FETZER/42



## THE INVISIBLE INNER CITY

Poverty, crime and decay in Roanoke's oldest neighborhoods

## Man held in Radford arson, murder

# Ad assists in arrest of suspect

Police charged a former student with arson and first-degree murder in a 16-month-old case.

By LISA K. GARCIA  
THE ROANOKE TIMES

RADFORD — Police arrested a former Radford University student late Tuesday on charges of first-degree murder and arson more than a year after another student died in a house fire on Grove Avenue.

Authorities said an advertisement placed by Christopher T. Murch's family was crucial in cracking the case.

Officers arrested Michael Stephen Harvey, 20, in Caroline County after a Radford Circuit Court Grand Jury returned two indictments against him Tuesday morning. Each charge carries a

maximum sentence of life in prison. A court date will be set Friday when Harvey is arraigned.

Police sought Harvey in the Orange County town of Barboursville, where he lives with his mother, but later had military police arrest him at Fort A.P. Hill, just south of Fredericksburg. Harvey was conducting annual training for the National Guard, according to police.

Radford Deputy Chief Jonny Butler said an advertisement placed by the victim's family in the local paper and the school's student newspaper "shook the trees." The ad, which ran in April, offered a \$1,000 reward for any information leading to the arrest and conviction of who ever set the fire that killed their son and brother.

"We never close an investigation," said Harvey's mother. PLEASE SEE ARSON/46

## Father shows video of young McVeigh

# 'He is not the monster he has been portrayed as,' mom tells jurors

But the prosecution spoke last and quoted the Oklahoma bomber's own words to remind the jury what type of person Timothy McVeigh is.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

DENVER — Timothy McVeigh's mother read a short note Wednesday to the jury that will decide whether her son lives or dies. It had taken her three attempts over three hours to write it.

"I am pleading for my son's life," she said. "Mickey" McVeigh. "He is a human being, just as we all are."

His father brought a 10-minute videotape into the courtroom. The painfully shy William McVeigh could not look at the jury or his son. He stared at the floor as the jurors watched scenes of life with the defense lawyer in Penitentiary, N.Y.

Afterward, defense lawyer Richard Burr showed the jury a five-year-old photograph of the smiling and laughing father-and-son duo standing arm-in-arm in the kitchen of their small family home.

"Is the Tim that we see in this picture the Tim that you know?" asked Burr.



Marcie Knight, who lost her daughter in the blast, tears up as she tells the media outside the U.S. Courthouse in Denver that she is against the death penalty. Timothy McVeigh's lawyers rested after four days of defense testimony in the penalty phase of the Oklahoma City bombing trial, picture the Tim that you know?" asked Burr.

"I believe so," the father answered.

"Do you love the Tim in this picture?"

"Yes, I love Tim."

"Do you love the Tim in this picture?"

PLEASE SEE McVEIGH/46

## This mayor has confronted more than just disgruntled voters

# Bowers broke in after the punch

When tempers flared in a mall parking lot, Roanoke's mayor intervened to stop the fight.

By LAURENCE HARMACK  
THE ROANOKE TIMES

Most of David Bowers' confrontations have been political. But one night last December, Roanoke's mayor got a little physical.

Bowers had just walked out of a drugstore at Towers Mall when he heard a man and a woman arguing. Thinking it was a lover's spat, Bowers didn't pay much attention until he saw the man punch Catherine Bradley hard enough

to break her nose.

That's when Bowers stepped between Bradley and her attacker and ordered the man to back off.

"He kind of glared at me," Bowers said. "At one point, I remember thinking that I might have to tackle this guy..."

I'm not sure who would have gotten the better of that." The man turned and ran — but not before Bowers and another passer-by got his license number and called police.



Bradley

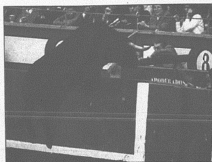
Bowers was subpoenaed to tell his story to a Roanoke jury Wednesday. But at the last minute, Michael Anthony Thomas decided to plead no contest to a felony charge of breaking Bradley's nose during an argument over a parking spot.

Both Bradley and Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Wes Nance credited the mayor with breaking up the fight before it became more serious.

"I know that Mr. Bowers has had a lot of bad publicity recently," Bradley said, alluding to proposed pay raises for the mayor and City Council mem-

PLEASE SEE MAYOR/46

## NOT ENOUGH GORE?



A BULL TRIES to jump over the wall of the Las Ventas bullring during a bullfight in Madrid. Bullfighting aficionados were appalled at how many inferior bulls appeared in this year's five-week San Isidro festival. LARRY FORN

ASSOCIATED PRESS

## THE INVISIBLE INNER CITY

A SPECIAL REPORT

FROM A1

## Fetzer

Other developers went belly-up after fixing up nearby properties in the city's "neighborhood stabilization/enhancement" program. Houses near Fetzer's are crumbling, threatening his investment.

As Fetzer's insistence, the city replaced old brick sidewalks on Campbell Avenue Southwest. Since then, he says, there's been little city help. "I think the city thought its obligation was over when it put in the sidewalk."

"I feel almost betrayed," he said. "It's like we moved forward but nobody else did."

Fetzer won about \$120,000 in federal loans through the city to restore the houses. Fetzer said many other cities allocated the money for the program in grants and didn't expect repayment, but he felt better when city officials told him around 1980 that his loan payments would go into a

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

The Times wants to hear its readers' views about Roanoke's oldest downtown neighborhoods and what is happening to them. If you have something you'd like to say, call 782-0100 or write to the editor, c/o The Invisible Inner City, P.O. Box 1000, Roanoke, VA 24002.

housing revolving fund. That way, his money would help other people renovate inner-city housing.

But no such fund was ever established. "That's almost fraud, the way we were led into this," Fetzer said.

Dan Pollock, Roanoke's housing development coordinator, said recently that loan payments such as Fetzer's go into the city's general income and may be used for housing programs or other federally funded work, including economic development. "It's not earmarked to come back into the same pool," Pollock said.

Just as Fetzer's West End houses are an island of investment in a long stretch of neglected real estate, so are his two refurbished office buildings on Day Avenue behind the Post Federal Building.

Building Specialists Inc., the contracting and renovation company of which he's president, has its offices in the khaki-colored building at 114 Day Ave. S.W. Next door is a large pink office building that Fetzer restored and rents out. He fixed up a green rental house nearby on Elm Avenue. Otherwise, the housing around his office is run-down and crime-ridden.

One of Fetzer's tenants on Elm Avenue was urged by a man who lived nearby. Tenants in buildings near his West End houses have set fire twice to his

buildings. Fetzer, trying to be an urban pioneer, didn't know it would involve having to pick up trash and play detective.

Sometimes his own tenants are the criminals. Fetzer said it took him six months to evict a woman who was selling drugs from one of his apartments. Some tenants, savvy about landlord-tenant law, he said, will stay until a court-ordered eviction has run its course and a sheriff's deputy puts them out.

Because the blocks around his office buildings continue to deteriorate,

Fetzer has trouble attracting business tenants. "I've two different law firms who said they liked our buildings. They liked our facilities, but they didn't want to be on Day Avenue."

He acknowledges that his high hopes are often dashed. "I'm a bit of a dreamer," he said.

Fetzer worked his way through East Tennessee State University as an apprentice ironworker, carpenter's helper and drywall worker. His degree was in health, physical education and history. He came to Roanoke in 1973. His first Roanoke Valley job was as a kinesiotherapist at the Veterans Administration hospital in Salem.

To pay for a divorce, Fetzer and a friend set up Cleaning Services Ltd. and moonlighted while at the VA. That company grew into Building Specialists Inc., a general contracting company now 20 years old. Fetzer bought out



STEPHANIE KLEIN-DAVIS / THE ROANOKE TIMES

used Properties Inc. He and his architect partner and vice president, Eale Shumate, build and renovate homes and offices. The company also owns 30 rental units, mostly in Old Southwest and West End.

Among Building Specialists' high-profile projects was the restoration of two former Wells Avenue Northwest homes the city moved nearby to Gilmer Avenue.

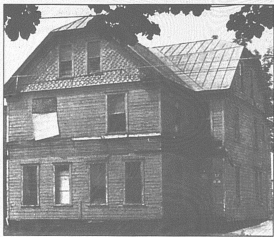
One of the historic homes recently was sold to a moderate-income family; the other is still for sale.

For all Fetzer's commitment to downtown neighborhoods, he

## THE LANDLORD

**Bob Fetzer**  
Age: over 45  
Occupation: Builder and developer  
Address: 2602 Stanley Ave. S.E.  
— FROM 1982 TO OCTOBER 1996 —  
Buildings owned in recent years: 25  
Number cited by city building inspectors: none  
Best-known properties: Row of pastel rental houses in the 900 block of Campbell Avenue Southwest

THE ROANOKE TIMES



ROANOKE CITY'S LAWYER AND BOB FETZER, 1996

## WHY IT MATTERS

*'Everybody in the community is going to have to be a stakeholder, whether they live in Hunting-Hills, because they're going to be our same slums if we don't stop it now.'*

**BOB FETZER**  
ROANOKE BUILDER AND DEVELOPER

served on a committee that advised the city on its new rental inspection program. The city hired two new inspectors, for a total of five, and has been inspecting rental units in selected areas since fall.

"It's easy to go and condemn a property," he said, "but we need a program in place to help the tenants who are displaced" and landlords who need low-interest loans and grants to bring buildings up to code.

He has warned that without help to property owners, the program will lead to more demolitions and more abandonment of houses. "How," he asked, "are the

## WHO TO CALL

Need help? Information? Want to get involved?

- Roanoke Housing Department, 853-1208 or 853-2222
- Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley, 344-2080
- Roanoke Neighborhood Partnership, 345-8250
- Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority, 983-8281
- Blue Ridge Housing Development Corp., 774-7466

neighborhoods going to benefit from more boarded-up buildings?"

Mary Bishop can be reached at 961-3356 or mary@roanoke.com



STEPHANIE KLEIN-DAVIS / THE ROANOKE TIMES

Bernice Robinson, a receptionist for the Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority, lives in one of Bob Fetzer's apartments at Patterson Avenue and 10th Street Southwest. Fetzer tries to retain original staircases so his houses can be converted back into single-family residences.

his first partner and quit his VA job.

Fetzer is president of both Building Specialists and Reno-

vues his home in South Roanoke. He has no apology for it — he says he wishes property values in other neighborhoods were

gaining in value at the rate they are in South Roanoke.

A leading advocate of the city's greenspace plan, Fetzer also

Key states will be targeted to receive most of party's resources for midterm elections

## Clinton rallies Democratic donors in early start to '98 races

The party is \$16 million in debt and under scrutiny for questionable fund raising. Both problems threaten to scare donors away.

**WASHINGTON** — His party saddled with debt and controversy, President Clinton summoned big-name Democratic donors for a pep talk on a strategy to target key states in an unusually early start to the 1998 midterm elections.

In daytime sessions featuring

a personal pitch by Clinton, the party's fattest fat cats were promised a unified front to elect Democrats to Congress, governorships and state legislatures. States such as California, Arkansas, Nevada and Washington — with contested races up and down the ticket — will receive the lion's share of the party's attention.

Political aides from the White House and the Democratic National Committee met at a Washington hotel with 40 to 50 donors before Clinton addressed the group Wednesday evening. The donors were asked to raise

and contribute \$250,000 each over two years.

The high-profile sessions came at a critical time for the party — it is \$16 million in debt and under investigation for questionable fund-raising techniques coordinated by Clinton's re-election team. Both problems threaten to scare donors away.

Bill Rollnick, a Miami investor and longtime Democratic donor, plans to keep giving but voiced a typical complaint: The fund-raising controversy has cast a shadow over all donations. He blamed party leaders for failing to

sift out improper 1996 contributions.

"That really was stupid. Real stupid," he said. "That was asking for trouble."

The president and his team focused on broad and ambitious plans for the 1998 elections. Clinton's donors were told the goals are to:

- Capture control of the House.
- Pick up seats in the Senate, though a Democratic majority is not expected.
- Compete for vulnerable statehouse seats, because

redistricting in 2000 gives immense power to the next crop of governors and state lawmakers.

Alper said all elements of the party — including Senate, House and gubernatorial election committees — are working together on message, spending and targeting strategies.

Democratic campaigns were

coordinated in 1994 only for fund raising. In 1996, Democrats broadened the joint approach, but not until four months before the election.

"We've always been collegial and cooperative," Alper said. "What's different is we have a joint strategy early, and we're planning together and we're implementing together."

Officials said the midterm Democratic message likely will follow Clinton's 1996 appeal to suburban and female voters: stress education, anti-crime and health care initiatives.

# THE INVISIBLE INNER CITY

A SPECIAL REPORT

## Readers respond to 'The Invisible Inner City'

We devoted the second week in our series on "The Invisible Inner City" to what makes up nearly two-thirds of the living quarters in Roanoke's central neighborhoods — rental housing.

The stories described the troubles both of landlords who own these properties and of the renters who live in hundreds of sub-standard houses.

We showed renters living with little heat and holes in ceilings, in places that barely passed the building code even when repairs were made. We showed landlords whose tenants moved out without notice and without paying rent, leaving behind damaged and dirty apartments.

Dozens of these houses are repeatedly cited by city building inspectors for violations. Some landlords, such as Frank Roupas and John Kepley, have frequently been taken to court by inspectors, yet judges have given them extra time to comply or levied only light fines against them.

To the displeasure of residents, some landlords, such as the now-defunct JMI Properties, used federal and private money to build cheap, box-like housing next to well-crafted old homes. Another landlord, Bob Fetzer, restored eight old homes, preserving their character and yet still renting them to poor tenants.

In our third and final week, we will show some of the things other cities are doing to save their old neighborhoods, the failure of Roanoke's government and nonprofit organizations to address neighborhood decay, and what a few neighborhood groups in Roanoke are doing.

Here a week readers said in response to the stories so far: "Your series of articles covering the deteriorating of the inner city of Roanoke... is a wake-up call to the City Council and its management team, which includes the city manager. We recently were told of the deplorable conditions of many of the city parks. Now the citizens are told of the deteriorating conditions of seven areas of Roanoke, which has been squaring for years. It appears the city fathers have not taken responsibility and have turned their backs to what is

there before us... burned newspaper in the oven to heat it... It took [us] three months to make it liveable. Tenants next door cut trees in the yard and burned them in the fireplace... Landlords need to stop term-basis at first and then check on them... Landlords do have a leg to stand on; they're just not using it."

—FRANCES TALOR, ROANOKE

"My brother and I have just completed renovating a house on Fifth Street in Southeast. We felt comfortable about putting our money and labor into this area, and we haven't been disappointed. You couldn't ask for nicer neighbors. They all look out for each other, and it doesn't get any better than the structural integrity of the homes that were built in the 1930s. We have respect for the area and the people who live here. We feel that Southeast has a lot going for it in local interest, because it's in walking distance of the market, and in the structure and charm of the older homes."

—JOAN PETRUS, ROANOKE COUNTY

"I'm amazed at the people who called to comment about developing some type of tax to clean up these inner cities. That they need to do... I create a fund and call it the Roanoke City Refurbished Program Fund, and find these people that are living in these houses that are run-down and trash in front of them and so forth. Secondly, they need to fine the landlords of these empty houses where they are living off the streets and dealing drugs and causing a lot of the crime, and other people who are not living off the streets and dealing drugs are the ones that have the control. The people that run the city are the ones that need to implement whatever fines or whatever they need to do in order to clean it up. It's not everybody's responsibility, especially those that don't even live in this area to be taxed for it."

—ROSSETTA KIRKMAN, SALEM

"What I want to know is why do the judges in Roanoke continue to let these people go in time after time with violations and they obviously aren't \$25 or \$30 and just tell 'em, you know, go away and sin no more and the same people keep coming back. Maybe if they would fine them



**THE INVISIBLE INNER CITY**  
Poverty, crime and decay in Roanoke's oldest neighborhoods



Solita Saunders, 5, plays in the front window of 1501 Patterson Ave. S.W., a stone mansion that was divided into eight rental units and is managed by Anglin Realty.



STEPHANE KLEIN-DOWNS / THE ROANOKE TIMES  
Electric meters line the outside wall of a multi-unit rental house on Day Avenue Southwest.



STEPHANE KLEIN-DOWNS / THE ROANOKE TIMES  
Tazewell Avenue Southeast once housed railroad and mill workers. When jobs were lost and homeowners left, houses like these were converted to rental units while others slid into decay.

what the law allows, they might get the idea that it's more expensive to keep going to court than it is to fix up some of these so-called rental units that they have in the city."

—RAY BAUROUSSE, ROANOKE

"I lived in Roanoke for a year and I was always fascinated by the downtown areas that you've focused on in your articles that are in recent history are First Baptist's tearing down of Day Avenue houses, St. Mark's Lutheran's tearing down of the Hoson mansion at the corner of Highland and Third, and between Old Southwest and downtown, St. John's tearing down of the Jefferson Apartments on Jefferson Street — after years of neglect by the churches which owned them. The result? Many fewer viable housing units and acres more of ugly, self-centered surface parking lots in our neighborhood."

Now, even the City of Roanoke itself wants to tear down the houses in the 500 block of Church Avenue Southwest for parking for the Jefferson Center — nice-beautiful structures left to rot by irresponsible owners — already surrounded by usually-empty, ill-maintained parking lots."

—ALAN FIELD, GREENSBORO

"... We know that when an owner comes to a leak, whether with wallpaper, peeling plywood or vinyl siding, the leak is still there and continues to rot away the house. When one house deteriorates, others around it are likely to follow, particularly when non-owner-occupied..."

—ALAN FIELD, GREENSBORO

"Also, this series would be truly complete without addressing

that landlords get by with what they feel with... I feel that more needs to be done and they really need to be cracked down on, and people need to have better living premises to raise their families in and to make our city look better."

—STACY SOWARDS, ROANOKE

"When some place is condemned, I believe it isn't repaired immediately, it ought to be demolished. It's the law's fault, not [the landlord's]. You can't legislate goodness and righteousness, but you can uphold the law, and that's who I blame in this situation. I feel sorry for these tenants who put up with this, and I hope something changes because of this excellent series."

—PAT SATCHEL, ROANOKE

"The city just doesn't put any teeth into its ordinances... they just can't handle the bad boys. What a shame."

—LAN VAN REID, ROANOKE

"As far as some of the mess goes, you have people sitting in jail doing nothing, prisoners, get them out there, clean them. They're part of these areas. They're part of the community when they get out — put them to work! Let them help clean up over here... They're sitting around on their butts, doing nothing, so put them to work."

—JOHN BEELS, ROANOKE

"Why has the Times come out with these articles on rental housing in Roanoke? A few months back the city was starting into effect a rental program to try and improve rental housing... It is very evident that the past regulations of building inspections was not strong enough to force landlords to repair their property. This new program is also a joke. If landlords don't want to pay and courts under the old plan then why do the city and you believe they will obey this new program?"

—RAY W. BARBER, ROANOKE

"I was reading in the paper where the latest set of laws where properties are low income so they shouldn't be cosmetically looking good. That's not true. Low-income housing people have the right to live in something nice and that's why the neighborhoods had become these landlords want money. They don't think about the tenants, they just want the money... Something needs

to be done about these sorry landlords."

—DONNA GRUBB, ROANOKE

"I'm a landlord... Properties ought to be maintained to where it's livable, but at the same time there's another side to this story that needs to be taken a strong look at. There's a deeper root problem here. Some people... just live a different lifestyle. They're not going to take as good care of it by nature. I think that people know that landlordism is a business. Landlords are not going to lose money."

—MIKE WHITEHEAD, ROANOKE

"I want you to know that at one time I was low income, and I possibly could be again, but I can tell you that my house was never destroyed. As long as I had running water and the ability to get up and pick up the trash, no matter what condition the house was in, it was clean. And I noticed in most of these pictures that you've published, there's a trash on the floor, trash in the yard, and I think it's just terrible. If these people do this to their house in this condition, the bad conditions they're in, what would they do to a good house?"

—MARSHA STINER, SALEM

"The picture of the little feet finally provoked this response. Having taught in one of these inner-city neighborhoods from 1960 to 1955, and having returned to live in this beautiful valley in 1980, this decay has saddened me. I have read with interest and despair this series of articles. When I taught at [Jamison Elementary] I saw it in that, these little feet had shoes so that they could attend school. There was an identity, community spirit and caring between the school and the neighborhood. What changed? The schools were consolidated, old schools torn down, children bused across town and placed in larger schools where not only the children lost their identity, but the neighborhood to which they were transferred was not theirs. Everyone in their immediate neighborhood lost a focus. No longer is there a Jamison element, Harrison, Loudoun, Washington Heights, Tinker, Riverdale, Ginner or Wind River. The greatest loss of all, Jefferson High. Let the governing bodies and school boards beware. These cleanings and cover-ups are a cost-saving measure, but in my opinion, that was the greatest contributing factor in the decay of the inner city, and look at the cost now."

—SUELEN FERRELL, ROANOKE

Many Bishop can be reached at 983-3350 or mary@bishop.com. S.A. Shamer can be reached at 983-3330 or shamer@roanoke.com.

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The Times wants to hear its readers' views about Roanoke's oldest downtown neighborhoods and what is happening to them. If you have something you'd like to say, call toll-free at 981-0100 and go to mailbox 7824.

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obvious to the taxpayer... And until the problems started above are solved, not one of our city fathers should have a pay increase. The solution to some of these problems that City Council — get to work."

—LEIGH SEVIGNY, ROANOKE

"You take pictures of the money to the aid part of Tazewell Ave. When you are going to come up to the real Belmont area... you're going to see the mess in the Belmont Hills section, where people spend a lot of money landscaping their yards, fixing their houses, and cleaning people that we really care? The impression that you give from the photos... only gives a bad side of Southeast... when you're going to spread this thing around and give everybody an even break, not just simply look on the worst sections."

—J.C. DEHART, ROANOKE

"Yes, it's true that Roanoke has got a problem with the inner city and buildings and all, but these pictures... with the tires in the front yards, the dirty clothes on the floor, the filth in the houses, I don't think the landlords put those there."

—RONNIE KITT, BLACKSBURG

"Why don't these landlords check out these tenants?... One of the houses [my husband and I] bought was beautiful, but tenants

SUNNY  
High near 80.  
Low in mid 50s.  
Details on A2.

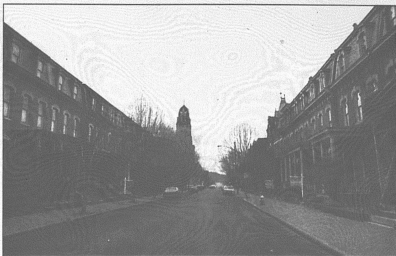
# THE ROANOKE TIMES

Homes B1  
Classified B2  
Deaths C2  
Local B1  
Sports C1

ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

www.roanoke.com

SUNDAY, JUNE 16, 1997 \$1.50



Liverpool Street in Pittsburgh's Manchester district is lined with historical rowhouses with decorative facades. Pittsburgh's long campaign to restore its central neighborhoods started in Manchester in the 1950s.

## Paint, nails not enough to rescue inner city

Story by MARY BISHOP and S.D. HARRINGTON

Photos by STEPHANIE KLEIN-DAVIS

THE ROANOKE TIMES

**T**he message from cities across America is that no longer can they chip away at urban problems one at a time. They have to attack everything at once.

They have to fix the houses, but at the same time create good jobs so people can afford to live in them. They have to rid the neighborhoods of drugs and violence so residents aren't scared to walk their streets and businesses will open.

They have to lure money, employers and the middle class away from the suburbs and back into the cities. But they also have to find good housing for poor people, not just chase them from one neighborhood to another.

"You can rebuild all the houses you want, but if you don't rebuild lives, it's not going to work," said Laverne Cooper, co-executive director of Baltimore's Sandtown Habitat for Humanity.

The Roanoke Times looked at what other cities around the United States are doing to save themselves. The stories in today's Horizon section describe the tools they are using.

We talked with community activists, writers, government workers, scholars and city dwellers. We read books, articles and academic papers. We traveled to Pittsburgh, Baltimore and Richmond because they were using particular grass-roots strategies we wanted to see. Though these cities are much larger than Roanoke, many of their methods could be replicated here.

We saw that salvaging a city is never-ending drudgery — even in places like Pittsburgh, with 89 highly organized neighborhoods and a mayor who used to be a neighborhood organizer.

Pittsburgh lost its steel mills, half its population and thousands of homes, but it's making a comeback.

Baltimore is doing everything it can to save one of its oldest and most troubled neighborhoods, Sandtown-Winchester.

Richmond nonprofits are aggressively fixing up handsome old housing that was left to rot.

No matter what cities do, urban experts warn, unless they and suburbs join forces, central-city neighborhoods will remain poor and ultimately fail. When that happens, these experts say, the decay will inevitably spread to the suburbs.

With government housing money drying up, neighborhood organizations are having to act like their own little governments — raising their own revenues, drawing up blueprints, luring businesses and cracking down on crime. And neighborhoods and the organizations within them are having to work together

**Other cities' solutions to inner-city problems.**  
Horizon

to stretch their money.

Probably no neighborhood has gotten more help than Baltimore's Sandtown-Winchester. It has been called a national urban laboratory, with plans to invest more than \$200 million of government and private money in a massive makeover. It's also an example of how hard it is even when the most lavish attention is paid to a poor community.

Sandtown was the heart of black Baltimore. It produced Billie Holiday and Cab Calloway. Thurgood Marshall grew up on Gilmer Street.

"It was a beautiful neighborhood, but it's completely changed, 100 percent," said George Boston, 71, a retired police officer who has lived there all of his life. Most of the middle- and upper-class left him behind and died to the suburbs years ago.

Boston stood on his block of Lafayette Avenue and pondered the changes. "The guy on the corner died," he said, pointing up that way. "The guy in the second house died. I think somebody's in the third house. Fourth house? Died. The next house?"

"I just realized," he said, pausing and seeming surprised. "Everybody died."

His children moved to the suburbs. "They don't want to live in my neighborhood."

Twenty-two percent of the adults in Sandtown are unemployed, according to The Enterprise Foundation in Baltimore; 40 percent have not earned high school diplomas or GEDs, 48 percent of the children live in poverty; and half of all households have annual incomes under \$11,000. The neighborhood has a 20 percent school dropout rate, and 71 percent of households are headed by women.

The late James Brown, who developed Baltimore's Harborplace and Mayor's Faneuil Hall Marketplace, teamed up with Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke to rescue Sandtown.

PLEASE SEE RESCUE/A13



## THE INVISIBLE INNER CITY

Poverty, crime and decay in Roanoke's oldest neighborhoods

Clinton launches yearlong 'conversation on race relations'

## President pledges to fight racism

50 years from now, the population of the United States will have no racial or ethnic majority.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN DIEGO — Declaring "we must not re-segregate higher education," President Clinton opened a yearlong campaign against American racism Saturday with a vigorous defense of affirmative action in a place where it has been erased.

Clinton told graduates of the University of California, San Diego, that affirmative action is among a number of questions that offer a chance to begin "a conversation on race relations today" to prepare for 50 years from now. That's when the population of the United States will have no racial or ethnic majority.

"I know affirmative action has not been perfect in America," the president said. "But when used the right way, it has worked."

"Many affirmative action students excel... If we close the door on them, we will weaken our greatest universities."

The fundamental question Americans must ask themselves, Clinton said, is whether they feel they "can be one America respecting, even celebrating, our differences."

"Can we define what it means to be an American not just in terms of the hyphen showing our ethnic

origins but in terms of our primary allegiance to the values America stands for?" he asked. "Our hearts long to know: r yes but our history reminds us that it will be hard."

Clinton chose to deliver this speech in California to underscore his opposition to Proposition 209, a 1996 ban on racial preferences. In 1995, the University of California system, including the campus he visited Saturday, ended

*'Many affirmative action students excel. If we close the door on them, we will weaken our greatest universities.'*

PRESIDENT CLINTON ADDRESSING CALIFORNIA GRADUATES

affirmative action in admissions.

Directly addressing foes of affirmative action, Clinton said: "I ask you to come up with an alternative. I would embrace it, if I can find a better way." To supporters, he urged a continued embrace and outreach "to those who disagree or are uncertain."

The president told the crowd how, without affirmative action, the number of blacks admitted to the University of California's Boalt

PLEASE SEE RACISM/A4

Pentagon criticized for actions

## Report links illnesses to chemical weapons

A General Accounting Office report challenges findings made during previous investigations.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

A new government report has harshly criticized the Pentagon and a special White House panel for their investigation of the illnesses reported by veterans of the 1991 Persian Gulf War and has found that there is "substantial evidence" linking nerve gas and other chemical weapons to the sorts of health problems seen among the veterans.

The report, by the General Accounting Office, the

investigative arm of Congress, says that the Defense Department should also not rule out the possibility that Iraqi biological weapons, especially aflatoxin, any of a group of potent liver carcinogens, might be responsible for some ailments reported by the estimated 80,000 Gulf War veterans who have sought special medical checkups from the government.

It also criticized the Pentagon for trying to discount another potential risk, a tropical disease spread by parasites that produces symptoms that might not surface for years, and questioned whether pesticides had contributed to the health problems.

PLEASE SEE REPORT/A4

## RISEING STAR



KELLY HARR JOHNSON / THE ROANOKE TIMES

BROOKE BRAMMER, 7, was a first-place winner at Saturday's bluegrass and old-time competitions in Rocky Mount. Story on C1.



SUNDAY, JUNE 15, 1997

## INNER-CITY RESCUE: OTHER CITIES' SOLUTIONS

# Managing growth is imperative

See *Portland Record* June 17

STORY BY MARY BISHOP

PHOTOS BY STEPHANIE KLEIN-DAVIS

THE ROANOKE TIMES

**P**oor neighborhoods can raise millions in private dollars to repair housing. They can find jobs for unemployed people and do everything else described in today's stories.

But it won't do much good, some experts say, unless cities and their suburbs begin to work together. Only then can a city's core keep from losing most of its resources to the burgeoning 'burbs.

Urban thinkers trying to halt inner-city decline and suburban sprawl look to Oregon as their model. Nearly 20 years ago, Oregon's legislature required the state's 241 cities and surrounding counties to create "urban growth boundaries" on expansion. Land outside the boundaries was zoned for farms and forests.

Oregon's growth management — preserving green space and enforcing strict land-use and environmental laws — has been credited with helping make it one of the fastest-growing and hottest high-tech states in the nation. Six

More stories on what other cities are doing inside Horizon



Crawford Square overlooks Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Civic Arena. These new homes have been bought by professionals and former public housing residents.

in Portland's poorest neighborhood.

David Rusk, a former mayor of Albuquerque and New Mexico state legislator, studied 117 major metropolitan areas for his book "Cities Without Suburbs." The title reflects his belief that cities and suburbs are really one economic entity.

Many suburban dwellers work in central cities, he and others point out. Low-wage workers who live in the cities often work in the suburbs. The cities and the suburbs therefore need each other.

And yet in the competitive wage governments usually operate, he says, suburbs feed off the vigor of central cities and shirk responsibility for the poor. Meanwhile, the poor become more congested and demoralized near the hearts of the cities and the resulting crime spreads outward into surrounding communities.

A National League of Cities study concluded that the greatest economic progress comes to metro areas with the least discrepancy between the incomes

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And go to mailbox 7824.

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warned in his book, "Inner-city neighborhoods deteriorate as places to raise families. With shrinking tax bases, city budgets are unable to meet rising social needs."

In Roanoke, the city's general fund spending on health and welfare has more than doubled in the last 10 years.

Rusk cautions that, when cities quit growing, they start shrinking. That appears to be happening in Roanoke. After its last annexation in 1976, Roanoke's population dropped from 100,220 in 1980 to 96,307 in 1990. The 1996 U.S. Census



Taking a walk through Baltimore's Harlem Park neighborhood are (from left) Jasmine Gurner, neighborhood community service coordinator; Robert Ford, St. James Episcopal Church layman and president of the Harlem Park Neighborhood Council; Winifred Asbury, who has lived in Harlem Park for 54 years; and Lily Swift, who has lived in the neighborhood for 48 years.



Sitting on the steps of Cary 2000-Phase III at 2218 W. Cary St. in Richmond are (from left) Gerry Scarborough, 15; Toni Scarborough; James Davis, 18; and Chante Taylor, 20. The three-story town houses were built by a civic group and the Richmond Better Housing Coalition.

"If one town does it, every town has to do it," says Bill Bishop, a columnist with the Lexington Herald-Leader.

In April, Maryland's legislature passed anti-sprawl legislation called "smart growth" that will pump hundreds of millions of state dollars into densely populated old neighborhoods in both cities and suburbs. Rusk said such incentives don't work as well as comprehensive state land-use plans.

Without state plans, says land-use writer Thomas Hyton, affluent communities will continue to shun poor people and seek their own revenue-producing development. As a result, he wrote in his 1995 book "Save Our Land, Save Our Towns," the poor will remain trapped in the cities and the countryside will be "steadily degraded by the haphazard construction of houses, offices and stores for people fleeing urban blight."

In Virginia, annexation and consolidation long were the only ways land-hungry cities could stretch their boundaries. The General Assembly put a moratorium on annexations 18 years ago, and consolidation is not a popular idea in the Roanoke Valley — or, apparently, anywhere else. Valley voters rejected it in 1969 and 1990, Rusk says there have been only 19 city-county mergers anywhere in the United States since World War II.

Virginia's General Assembly recently created the Urban Partnership and the Regional Compact-Hiwien Act, a system to financially reward local governments that get together and share

expenses. Roanoke, four nearby counties and several smaller cities are talking about forming a health insurance buying club to save money, for example. But getting together to regionally control growth is practically unheard of in Virginia.

Virginia Del. Taylor Murphy, D-Richmond County, was chairman of the now-defunct Commission on Population Growth and Development a few years ago

when it called for statewide and regional growth management. "There was so much opposition — the Realtors, the homebuilders, everybody," Murphy said. Almost nothing came of the commission's ideas.

Two years ago, the legislature

"You would have thought we were communists, even talking about these issues," Murphy said.

### RESOURCES

#### "Managing Growth"

National Urban Management Leadership Project, 634 N.W. Third Ave., Suite 718, Portland, Ore. 97204; e-mail: [urban@netnet.com](mailto:urban@netnet.com)

"Cities Without Suburbs" by David Rusk, 1995, The Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1800 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006; \$25.00; ISBN 0-819-56100-0

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# THE INVISIBLE INNER CITY

Poverty, crime and decay in Roanoke's oldest neighborhoods

years ago, Washington state began similar statewide planning. Portland is the crown jewel of the Oregon movement. Its metropolitan services district is the only popularly elected regional government in the United States. Five counties and 24 municipalities share operation of a park system, zoo, convention center, and water, sewer and trash systems. A metro council decides where rail lines, highways, shopping centers and industrial parks will go. Affordable housing and the poor are scattered throughout the region.

"While many Americans build on big suburban lots and endure hours of commuting, Portland voters have sought high-density communities and public transit. The result has been little sprawl, a booming downtown and a near doubling of property values even

of city dwellers and suburbanites. There's a wide gap in the Roanoke Valley: Roanoke's 1990 per capita income, \$7,949, is only 63 percent of Roanoke County's figure of \$12,518.

It could be better, Rusk argues. "If you can slow the sprawl, the whole community is better off."

Even with flourishing downtown, inner cities decline," he

estimate puts Roanoke's population at 96,307.

Lexington, Ky., set up a county-wide government about 20 years ago and growth boundaries even earlier. Some community activists say the line has blurred around the edges and pressure is building to erase it. And sprawl continues just across the line because there's no state plan like Oregon's.