

focus on denver

Quigg Newton struggles to become a community

by Carol Statland

Sunnyside, once known for its Italian population, is a north Denver neighborhood. Its boundaries are 38th Avenue to Interstate 70 and from Inca to Federal Boulevard. A number of Italians still reside in single family homes, developed prior to 1940, in the western edge of the neighborhood.

Although 50 per cent of the Sunnyside homes are owner-occupied, there is a large rental complex that is often overlooked in the neighborhood. The complex, Quigg Newton homes, is Denver Housing Authority's public housing for low income families. Occupying a seven block area from 42nd to 46th Avenues and from Lipan to Newton, the complex provides 300 units.

There are many problems in this area of Sunnyside. Although it is geographically a part of the Sunnyside neighborhood, Quigg Newton is a community of its own, with a different life style. Its problems are unique to its residents and do not apply to the rest of the neighborhood.

Quigg Newton residents are beginning to realize that they

must take the action upon themselves in resolving these problems.

One of the major concerns is senior citizens, many of whom are very lonely. When they see their families, the time is often spent doing errands they are unable to do on their own, and there is actually little time for visiting.

Chicano senior citizens are even more isolated than the Anglo senior citizens. Many speak only Spanish and are unable to speak with their neighbors. Senior citizen programs and activities are not planned with the Chicano in mind.

Many of the senior citizens living at Quigg Newton travel to 34th and Pecos for the hot lunch program. The meal is only 25 cents, but the cost of bus fare makes it a costly activity for a limited budget.

Public transportation is lacking in the area. With many people walking long distances to the grocery store, it's common to see an elderly person pushing a cart of groceries, or picking up the contents of a broken grocery sack on the street.

Globeville residents utilize the community services in the Sunnyside area, but this entails another transportation problem. Although the two neighborhoods border each other, a bus trip involves transferring downtown.

Another concern of the community is its contact with the

public agencies and the problems they have in receiving public assistance. Too many people receive different amounts and really do not know why. The welfare appeal rights are not adequately understood and appeals are often rejected because they are filed incorrectly.

Because food stamp offices are understaffed, people often have to wait for a month for an appointment to apply for the stamps, even though they need the food today.

Quigg Newton residents have also been concerned with the lack of recreation facilities in the area. This need has been met by Denver Parks and Recreation's plans to build a \$500,000 recreation center at 44th and Navajo. The residents feel it is necessary to participate in its planning to ensure that the building meets the community needs.

According to Beatrice Villaneuva, a concerned resident, Quigg Newton is really not a community, but it could be. The residents would benefit from more interaction among themselves. There is much a senior citizen knows that a middle aged person or child is eager to learn.

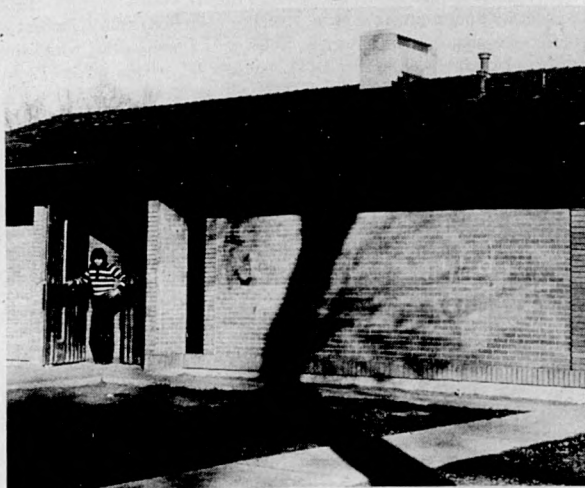
And there is much a younger person can offer the elderly person in return, such as shoveling a walk or mowing the lawn.

Villaneuva sees such interactions as an integral step in making Quigg Newton a community that will benefit all its members. The residents could accomplish more if they would organize in breaking down the barriers facing them.

Villaneuva is responsible for the establishment of the North Denver Alliance Bus. This bus will provide free transportation to grocery stores and community services for Sunnyside and Globeville residents.

The project has been funded for six months, and hopefully, RTD will take over the service.

But there still remains much to be done in the areas of welfare rights, establishment of a food co-op, housing improvements and community interaction.



Quigg Newton Center faces shaky future - or none at all

by Helen Ballou

The Quigg Newton Community Center, at 4430 Navajo, has a rather precarious future. At this writing, it is funded only until December 31, 1974.

The Center was closed in 1970, but was reopened by Father Joseph Lara in 1973, after he was besieged with requests for another community center. He obtained funding from the Parks and Recreation Department through Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, according to Ernie Alva, Acting Director.

The Center serves approximately 400-500 people of all ages in this area. Their activities include a Men's Club, where neighborhood men 18 years and up can come in twice a month for rap sessions, or just to play pool and foosball.

Boxing is a popular sport activity for the 8 year olds and up. This is directed by the Head Coach, Al Rodriguez. Weight lifting is carried out in a special weight room.

The teen-age Girl's Club holds plenty of bake sales to raise

money for all the sports equipment. Two nights a week is set aside for men's basketball.

Ron Sain and Carmen Montoya, in addition to teaching arts and crafts to the children, also counsel the youth who come to the center.

Carmen also conducts a Mexican Dinner every Friday night. The proceeds from this dinner are used to rent movies from the Denver Public Library.

The Veterans also use the center for their regular meetings and activities.

The IBM Corporation sends instructors to the center several nights a week to teach the young people drafting skills and how to work with electronic equipment. The program is received with much enthusiasm, drawing a sizeable amount of participation.

The city is presently building a new center across the street, but everyone is uncertain as to the details of the planning.

One can only hope that Quigg Newton Community Center will exist beyond this year in order to continue their fine work.

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