

## Discussion ~ Continued from Front

The program will also feature expressions of recovery from the mental health community, and the winner of NPI's writing contest for high school students. The winner will read excerpts from his/her essay on the topic: "Is there a link between mental illness and homelessness?" Any Lucas County student in grades 9-12 is invited to participate up until the deadline of midnight April 15. The essay should be no more than 500 words and must include an entry form. Winners will receive gift cards of \$100, \$50 and \$25 for first, second and third place respectively. To request an entry form or for more information please contact:

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Phone: 419-473-2604 X119

Email: [pmorrison@neighborhoodproperties.org](mailto:pmorrison@neighborhoodproperties.org)

Tickets are \$25 before April 25 or \$35 thereafter; a table of 10 costs \$225. Admission is free for NPI tenants. Sponsorship packages and program ads are also available and reasonably priced. For more information or to make a reservation contact NPI.



The David C. and Lura M.  
Lovell Foundation



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### NPI Mission

To find a way of ending homelessness for persons with serious mental illness and addiction disorders.



You can help end homelessness for persons with mental illness by designating your United Way gift to NPI. Simply select the "Other" option when choosing a focus for your contribution. Then write "Neighborhood Properties, Inc." or "NPI" on the form.



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"Is there a link between  
mental illness and homelessness?"

ESSAY CONTEST FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



Non-Profit Org.  
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Permit No. 126

Quarterly Update to the Community



Spring 2011

# developments

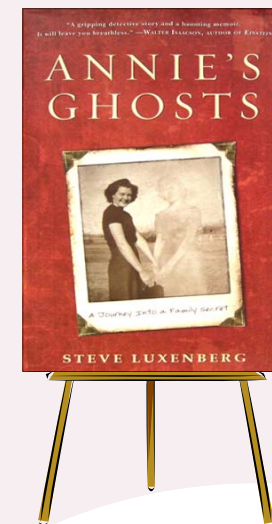
Neighborhood Properties, Inc.



## A Discussion of Mental Health

NPI will mark Mental Health Month with an event featuring award-winning author and *Washington Post* Associate Editor Steve Luxenberg. **Our primary sponsor is the David & Lura Lovell Foundation.**

**The dinner will take place from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 5 at the Toledo Hilton Ballroom. A 'Meet the Author' reception, also at the Hilton, begins at 5 p.m.** Steve's book is about mental health, stigma and the consequences of secrecy. The story begins with the discovery that Steve's mother was not an only child as she had said so often; she had a sister who'd been institutionalized and kept hidden for decades. Set in Detroit, *Annie's Ghosts: A Journey Into a Family Secret* is part detective story, part social history and part memoir. It was named one of *The Post's* Best Books of 2009 and honored as a 2010 Notable Book by the Library of Michigan. A frequent speaker on mental health and journalism, Steve gave the keynote address at NAMI's 2009 national gala in Washington, D.C.



"A gripping detective story and a haunting memoir. It will leave you breathless."

- Walter Isaacson, author of *Einstein: His Life & Universe*

Until he was in his forties, the writer had no reason to question his mother's biography. He knew her name was Beth, she was an only child, and she had raised him to tell the truth. Then, at age 78, Beth casually told a new doctor that she had a disabled sister, sent away at age two, her fate unknown. After Beth's death in 1999, her secret surfaced once more. This time, it had a name: Annie.

As Steve began digging, the secrets unraveled. His mom's name wasn't Beth. Annie hadn't been two when she was institutionalized. She was 21, his mother 23. They had grown up together. He learned about stigma, and what it does to a family. Please join us for this intriguing conversation, as well as a chance to meet the author, buy the book and get it signed.

(Continued on back.)



By Josh Luxenberg

STEVE LUXENBERG

# ...And Secrets



# Thank You for Your Support!



STATE REP. BARBARA SEARS



**ADDRESSING THE CROWD:** State Rep. Sears at a housing forum Feb. 17 at the United Way of Greater Toledo. The event featured some wonderful success stories from FOCUS, Aurora House, NW Ohio Development Agency, Family House, Beach House, United North Corporation, Fair Housing Center and NPI.



**BACK ROW FROM LEFT:** Paul Mason, George Moore and Lynnette Hair of NPI. **FRONT ROW FROM LEFT:** Neiko Jones of NPI, State Rep. Sears and Frank Murphy of NPI.

*State Rep. Barbara Sears hears testimony on the Ohio Housing Trust Fund.*



**ESSENTIALS:** Community support allows NPI to provide these and other items to those in need.

*Thanks to Toledo Kiwanis and Corporate Housing Systems for helping NPI residents make homes out of empty apartments!*

**CORPORATE HOUSING SYSTEMS**



*out of the chaos & into the light*

# A Time for Peace

Bob Peace doesn't try to fit any mold.

Call his cell, and the greeting is so laid back you'll want a nap: "Yeah, this is Bobby. I'll call you back whenever I get the chance. You know how it is."

There are no facades. He's articulate, insightful, humble—all trademarks of someone serious about recovery. He started drinking at age 9. At some point he was diagnosed with major depression.

"It's hard to say which comes first, the chicken or the egg," he noted, since drugs are used to self-medicate but can *cause* mental illness too. "I was the last person to know I was half out of my mind. People tried to tell me."

Born into poverty, he followed in the footsteps of those around him.

"My mother was a party girl. She'd pay the rent, and we wouldn't see her... I emulated the guys that I thought were successful, the guys who had cars. They were usually the ones dealing drugs."

The days passed with drinking, depression and legal problems: **ROBERT PEACE** "When my son was born, I was intoxicated. When my (twin) daughters were born, I was incarcerated."

In prison for theft, he earned a general associate's degree from the U. of Findlay in 1993. Once out, he met a nice woman. Good things were happening.

"I started a construction business by accident," he deadpanned. "I had a couple little jobs, and people wanted to give me more work. I ended up with three trucks and nine employees."

Then in 2001 a buddy offered him heroin.

"The depression was gone. I did that stuff for four days straight, and that was it. I'd been doing well,

with a couple vehicles and a house. That was gone within a year. The girl was gone. I was homeless."

And trapped: "By the time I made a full-fledged decision to quit, I was broke and had no insurance."

Eight years later he was suicidal when a miracle happened. A nurse told him, to his surprise, that he had Medicaid. Finally he could get help—11 months in a top rehab facility in Williams County, Ohio.

"I had to be removed from that environment long enough to get on my feet mentally. That's as important as your actual recovery program. Otherwise, the old behaviors will come back."

He didn't sleep at all in the first 21 days of treatment, but his system eventually calmed down. Back in Toledo he went to the Salvation Army, where he met John Whitlow of PATH, Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness.

"I was willing to sleep in the snow to avoid going back" to the old neighborhood, Bob said. "Then John said to me, 'I have a place for you at NPI.'"

Today he enjoys a neat, compact apartment across from a park in West Toledo. Housing Support Specialist Larry Wanucha stops by to talk about how things are going. In January Bob began working on his bachelor's in social work at the U. of Toledo. He plans to complete his master's degree too.

"It's a steady climb, man. Each day it's a little better, a little better, a little better," he said.

The best thing is having his children back in his life: "They come over here, and they bring their kids over here. They tell me they love me. Words can't adequately describe what that means."

A few months ago he witnessed another miracle, the birth of his grandchild: "It was very, very emotional. I had to put my sunglasses on," he smiles.

