

Friends of Housing Rights, Inc.

Housing Rights Honors Laura Lane of EBCLC

Housing Rights, Inc. would not be able to accomplish much without the extraordinary support of such wonderful people as Laura Lane. Laura has been with the East Bay Community Law Center since she started with them as a supervising attorney in 1997. She received her BA in Classics from City University of New York, Hunter College (summa cum laude); an MA in Comparative Literature from San Francisco State University; and a JD from UC Berkeley Boalt Hall School of Law. As a law student Laura worked with EBCLC, Legal Aid Society of Alameda County, and the ACLU on numerous issues in housing, HIV/AIDS law, free speech, and civil rights law. A recipient of a Public Interest Fellowship, in 1996 Laura founded and directed an AIDS Law Project providing free legal services to people with HIV/AIDS. At EBCLC Laura works in housing rights and litigation.

Most importantly to us, and what can't be described adequately here, is her unwavering dedication to serving lower and lowest income households by addressing their complex and critical housing needs. Laura has made herself available to HRI and our staff. She brought us in as a collaborator in the Repair and Deduct Project (rentersrights.info).



According to Laura's mother (the proud Mom spoke at our reception on November 6th), it is very appropriate that we combined our annual celebration with the theatrical adaptation of Barbara Ehrenreich's bestseller "Nickel and Dimes" (more on that on Page 2). Laura knows what the people she is helping are going through. She knows what it will take to make the difference in their lives.

We thank Laura for her hard work and her contribution to the work of Housing Rights, Inc.

SAFE HOME CAMPAIGN -- SIGN UP NOW!

Inside:

- **Nickel and Dimed**
- **Celebrating the Human Family**
- **Homeownership Information Center (HIC)**

The staff of Housing Rights, Inc. work hard to help our clients get and keep their housing by exercising their housing rights. While in that housing, we also believe that they have a 'right' to be safe. Thus the staff have launched the "SAFE HOME CAMPAIGN".

We are preparing and distributing 200 "SAFE HOME PACKETS". These packets contain information about:

Domestic Violence. How to be and stay safe, how to recognize warning

signs and where to go for help if your home is NOT safe from other people in your household.

Accident-Proofing Your Home. Statistically most people are hurt by accidents in the home. There are some simple and basic prevention steps that we can take to reduce the likelihood that we will be the victim of an accident in our own home.

(Continued on page 2)

SAFE HOME CAMPAIGN (Cont.)



Smoke Free Homes. Second hand smoke is a serious health problem. Asthma and other serious health problems occur much more frequently in children who live in homes with smokers. Our packet contains information on how to reduce the health risks and how to get help to stop smoking.

Disaster Preparedness. Yes, the next great earthquake is just around the corner (or 30 years from now!). Just about everyone has an opinion. Since no one really knows and there are other kinds of disasters (fire for example) and since it is so easy to be prepared, our Packet contains sim-

ple information on how to be as ready as possible for the next natural disaster.

And finally, **SAFE SEX.** We provide information and materials that provide information about protection from AIDS and other diseases.

If you would like one of these packets (free to our clients) or would like to add something to them or would like to help us put them together or would like to get involved some-way....give us a call!

Nickel and Dimed (playwright: Joan Holden)

“How do America's low-wage working women manage to feed their kids, pay bills and make the rent? When a famous author goes undercover to find out, can she survive the life that millions of women endure every day?”

If you eat in restaurants, stay in hotels, hire household help, or shop at “Big Box” stores, this show will open your eyes. If you wait tables, change beds, scrub toilets or stock shelves to survive, it honors your hard work. If you are a labor, living wage, healthcare, affordable housing, or childcare activist, it highlights your issue. If you are a teacher who wants your students to know how 29% of America lives, it's a lesson they won't forget. If you are a feminist, if you support undocumented workers, if you are a mother, if you care about human rights, this play is for you.” (Brava Theater Press Release)

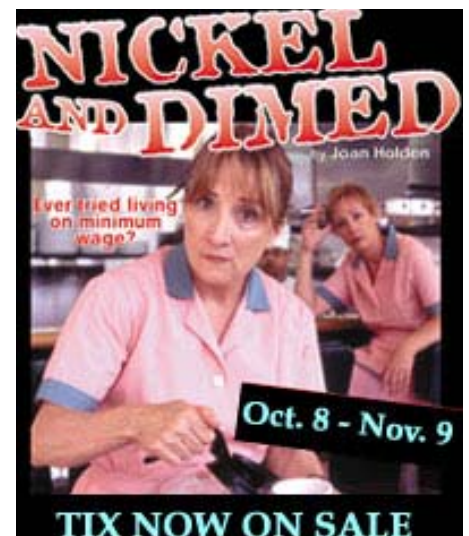
Housing Rights, Inc. is proud to have combined our annual reception with the showing of “Nickel and Dimed”

adapted from the book by Barbara Ehrenreich by playwright Joan Holden. The performance was held at the Brava Theater in San Francisco. (Check out their website at Brava.org.)

Where do the people live who make modern life so ‘comfortable’? Miles away from their job is the answer for many. And what kind of housing do the people who clean hotels and wait on tables live in? For many, especially immigrant and some African American communities the housing is not fit to live in.

For others, combining three and four, and sometimes more, low-income jobs is what it takes to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter and education.

What Joan illustrates, for us, is how much the middle and upper class lifestyles are ‘subsidized’ by working families who are not paid



enough to enjoy the same quality of life. Something to think about.

We are hopeful that the play will come to the east bay. When it does, be sure to see it.

Celebrating the Human Family - The Holiday Season

The holiday season brings with it both good and bad memories, good and bad feelings and good and bad behavior. It is a time of reflection and a time of celebration.

The staff and Board of Housing Rights, Inc. are asking you to join us in "Celebrating the Human Family". The first step is to learn about the 'members of our family'.

Many religions and cultures celebrate this time of year. One such holiday, celebrated by Muslims all over the world, is Ramadan.

The Fast of Ramadan

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar. The Month of Ramadan is also when it is believed the Holy Quran "was sent down from heaven, a guidance unto men, a declaration of direction, and a means of Salvation"

It is during this month that Muslims fast. It is called the Fast of Ramadan and lasts the entire month. Ramadan is a time when Muslims concentrate on their faith and spend less time on the concerns of their everyday lives. It is a time of worship and contemplation

During the Fast of Ramadan strict restraints are placed on the daily lives of Muslims. They are not allowed to eat or drink during the daylight hours. Smoking and sexual relations are also forbidden during fasting. At the end of the day the fast is broken with prayer and a meal called the *iftar*. In the evening following the *iftar* it is customary for Muslims to go out visiting family and friends. The fast is resumed the next morning

According to the Holy Quran:

One may eat and drink at any time during the night "until you can plainly distinguish a white thread from a black thread by the daylight: then keep the fast until night"

CELEBRATING
THE HUMAN
FAMILY

The good that is acquired through the fast can be destroyed by five things -

- the telling of a lie
- slander
- denouncing someone behind his back
- a false oath
- greed or covetousness

These are considered offensive at all times, but are most offensive during the Fast of Ramadan

When the fast ends (the first day of the month of Shawwal) it is celebrated for three days in a holiday called Id-al-Fitr (the Feast of Fast Breaking). Gifts are exchanged. Friends and family gather to pray in congregation and for large meals. In some cities fairs are held to celebrate the end of the Fast of Ramadan.

Home Ownership Information Center (HIC)

**LAUNCH DATE: January 5th, 2004!!
Mark your calendar.**

After a several month hiatus (due to staff changes and funding uncertainty) We are very proud to announce that Housing Rights, Inc. is launching its Homeownership Program under a new name. The Homeownership Information Center offers Homeownership Orientation Meetings, Homeownership Counseling, Financial Education Courses and a 'virtual' Information Center. Our services are provided by

appointment only at this time. We can be reached (message only) at 510-548-5803 or by e-mail at hic@housingrights.com. We also have a website at hic-at-hri.org

Some of our services will be available to City of Berkeley Residents only. Some will be fee for service (credit checks) and some, like our public computers and library are available to anyone interested in pursuing homeownership. Check us out in January!





HOUSING RIGHTS, INC.
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Become a Friend of Housing Rights Today!



Support Housing Rights, Inc. (HRI) by donating time, money or goods. By making a donation, you will continue to receive our "Friend of Housing Rights Newsletter" four times a year, filled with updates, news, commentary and events

Send us your "tiny ticket" BART cards.

If you would like merchants that you do business with to donate up to 5% of your purchase amount to Housing Rights, Inc. look up Escrip.org. Safeway, Chevron, and Andronicos's are only a few of the companies participating. Register your debit, credit or membership cards on-line! Our agency number is: 3881345

We are a proud member of BABUF (Bay Area Black United Fund) Visit www.BABUF.org. Our number is 227.

We are also a United Way Agency. Consider designating Housing Rights, Inc. next year when you sign up for payroll deduction (our number is 3962.)

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Enclosed please find my donation of
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 You will become a "Friend of Housing Rights" and receive quarterly newsletters and be invited to our annual reception.
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