

The Independence City Commission met for a regular meeting on April 25, 2019 at 5:30 P.M. in the Veterans Room at the Memorial Hall. Mayor Louis Ysusi, Commissioner Leonhard Caflisch, and Commissioner Gary Hogsett were present. Others present included:

City Staff

Craig Whitehead, City Manager
Jeff Chubb, City Attorney
Kelly Passauer, Assistant City Manager/Zoning Administrator
David Schwenker, City Clerk/City Treasurer
David Cowan, Director of Safety/ADA Coordinator
Shawn Wallis, Fire/EMS Chief
Mike Passauer, Public Works Director
Brian McHugh, Memorial Hall Supervisor
April Nutt, Director of Housing Authority
Jerry Harrison, Police Chief
Lacey Lies, Director of Finance
Barb Beurskens, Park and Zoo Director
Don Cushing, Building Inspector

Visitors

Ellie Davis
Larry McHugh
Patrica Riffe
Renata Butler
Jerry Bright
Edward Richardson
Robert Meadows
Judy Ysusi
Octavian Castorena
Erin Timble
Connor Harbit
Sally Dyer
Vera Henson
Thomas Cunningham
Gabe Wright
Jon Risner
H D Erickson
Steve Denny
Orlin Smith
Richard Garriss
Bob Miller
Stacy Dickerhoof
Cindy Lane
Winnie Jackson
Barbara Sharp
Michele Misler
Casey Merit

Ronald Schwatken
Jayne Mattix
Mike Gravin
Debbie Gravin
Dorcas Sutton
Ned Stichman
Diane Wullenschneider
Mike Davis
Lisa Richards

I. REGULAR SESSION

A. Call to Order

Mayor Ysusi called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

B. Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America

C. Adoption of Agenda

Motion:

On the motion of Commissioner Caflisch, seconded by Commissioner Hogsett the Commission adopted the agenda.

Aye: Ysusi, Caflisch, Hogsett

Nay: None

II. APPOINTMENTS

A. Housing Authority

1. 1 unexpired term (1 resignation)
2. 3 terms expired (3 terms have not served 2 full terms or more)

Motion:

On the motion of Mayor Ysusi, seconded by Commissioner Hogsett the Commission moved to reappoint Kim Goodman to a second term expiring April 11, 2023; Tim White to a second term expiring April 11, 2023; Gary Morrison to a second term expiring April 11, 2023; and appoint Rita Ortolani to an unexpired term expiring on April 11, 2022.

Aye: Ysusi, Caflisch, Hogsett

Nay: None

III. COMMON CONSENT AGENDA

(*Consent* is that class of Commission action that requires no further discussion or which is routine in nature. All items on the Consent Agenda are adopted by a single motion unless removed from the Consent Agenda.)

A. Appropriations

1. A-1837
2. D-1903A
3. P-1808

B. Consider approving the minutes of the February 28, 2019, March 14, 2019, and March 20, 2019 City Commission Meetings.

C. Consider sponsoring the MCAC Golf Tournament on June 7, 2019.

Motion:

On the motion of Commissioner Caflisch, seconded by Commissioner Hogsett the Commission adopted the consent agenda.

Aye: Ysusi, Caflisch, Hogsett

Nay: None

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Public hearing to consider condemnation of the structure(s) located at 301 N. 11th Street as dangerous and unsafe.

Building Inspector Cushing informed the Commission that the roof had been repaired and he recommended the Commission adjourn the public hearing for 60 days.

Mayor Ysusi opened the public hearing and with no one in attendance to speak about the structure, Mayor Ysusi closed the public hearing.

Motion:

On the motion of Mayor Ysusi, seconded by Commissioner Hogsett the Commission adjourned the public hearing for 301 N. 11th Street to 5:30 P.M. on June 27th, 2019.

Aye: Ysusi, Caflisch, Hogsett

Nay: None

B. Public hearing to consider condemnation of the structure(s) located at 517 W. Chestnut Street as dangerous and unsafe.

Building inspector Cushing reported that this structure was damaged by fire and had been boarded up. His recommendation is to proceed with condemnation.

Mayor Ysusi opened the public hearing.

Edward Richardson addressed the Commission. He stated that he had asked for several demolition bids but cannot afford any of them.

Commissioner Hogsett confirmed if he was willing to work toward removal.

City Attorney Chubb said he can prepare a consent document.

Mayor Ysusi closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Caflisch asked if he understood what happens if the City tears it down. He told him he is still liable for the cost for demolition.

City Attorney Chubb said if it is not paid it goes onto the tax rolls.

Mr. Richardson said he understands that.

City Attorney Chubb recommended moving forward with condemnation.

Motion:

On the motion of Commissioner Caflisch, seconded by Commissioner Hogsett the Commission condemned the structure located at 517 W. Chestnut Street as dangerous and unsafe and authorize the City Attorney to prepare documentation to expedite removal of the property.

Aye: Ysusi, Caflisch, Hogsett

Nay: None

V. PRESENTATION

- A. Presentation by Four County Mental Health Center to inform the Commission about its current substance use treatment and prevention activities.

Four County Clinical Director Steve Denney made a presentation that explained the Center's addiction programs and the use of the alcohol tax funds that they receive (attached to minutes).

Commissioner Hogsett and Commissioner Caflisch asked about successes.

Director Denney didn't want to throw out numbers, but he would get the information to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Caflisch asked about the age of a first time user.

Director Denney noted that for meth the average first use is 12 years old.

Mayor Ysusi asked about programs at the schools.

Director Denney replied that last year they had a grant working specifically with the school systems in MG County.

Commissioner Caflisch asked if the funding the City provides is used for prevention or recovery.

Director Denney said that 95% goes to treatment.

City Manager Whitehead said we are providing \$30,000, and there is \$42,000 in the fund.

VI. DISCUSSION

- A. Citizen request from Robert Miller to discuss modifying City Code to prohibit throwing grass in the street.

"My name is Bob Miller and I want to thank you for the opportunity to address the Commission. Warm weather and lawn mowing is here now. In the past I've noticed a number of properties around town that in the process of mowing their grass it was blown out into the street and left. In addition to looking bad and like a hay field it also is a safety issue for those who use the street to walk, bicycle or motorcycle and in addition when it rains the grass can be washed down into the sewer system. An email to me by Assistant City Manager Kelly Passauer dated February the 25th which is in your packet she listed a couple of sections of the code specifically section 94-33 and 94-35 that prohibits glass, nails, bottles, wire and dangerous objects in the street or to place anything that would interfere with the free flow of water in the streets. Those sections of the code are in the neighborhood of what I'm trying to achieve but don't specifically prohibit grass out in the street and leaving it. Since there has been a committee formed on blight and beautification and since the City has put an emphasis on blight and beautification, I'd like the Commission to either add language to those sections or create a new ordinance prohibiting blowing grass in the street and the sidewalks and leaving it when mowing. I'd like to see enforcement and I'd like for there to be consequences for habitual violators especially since the City has created a new full-time position for code enforcement and has hired a person as a code enforcement officer. I realized there were times because of some yards that blowing grass out in the street may happen however it doesn't take much time or effort to take the mower out in the street or a blower and blow the grass back into the yard so the street is kept clear and neat. There's really no excuse to blow grass out in the street and leave it. The simplest and easy way to solve this problem is to turn the mower in the other direction where the discharge lands in the yard and not in the street. I noticed in the packet there were several concerns that city staff lists and I'd like to address those. I have six of those to address as well. Number one was worrying about the expectation of enforcement and not enough staff to enforce an ordinance like this. Yes, the City should enforce their own ordinances. The City's commitment to beautifying the town should include anything that would meet that goal including the simple request of addressing the grass discharge problem. The City has recently created a new position and hired a full-time code enforcement officer. Number two, worrying about increasing cases in municipal court causing a bottleneck. I suggest publicizing this issue on the City's website and Facebook page, along with articles in

both newspapers and the city newsletter throughout the mowing season. In addition there could be a couple of warning letters sent to property owners before any action is taken. This gives ample warning to violators to make necessary changes and avoid going to court. With good code enforcement and retraining of the violators this problem should be minimal. Worrying about who to cite. The obvious answer is ultimately the property owner is responsible. The same party the City expects to pay the taxes on the property. Number four, worrying about witnessing the grass being mowed and discharged into the street. If you look at the pictures that I included in your packet and hopefully they'll flush them up on top here I provided. I think anyone with common sense when you look at those pictures can see this is a violation. In some cases, the streets look like a hay field. Regardless of who did the mowing or whether it was witnessed or not. Number five, worrying about telling people to mow their yard and then getting cited for mowing grass into the street. This is simply resolved by reminding them when mowing to not discharge their grass clippings into the street. Number six, worrying about how it may be hard for some locations to comply like the area between the cemetery wall and Penn Avenue. Where there's a will there's a way. How about blowing the grass in instead of out? How about using a mulch mower? Changing behavior regarding this topic may not be quick and without effort but it needs to start somewhere and if the City is truly serious and committed about blight and beautification and if the city truly cares about keeping the streets clear of debris for the safety of the residents now is the time and place to begin.

Mayor Ysusi liked the idea of publicizing it and reminding people that in our attempts to do the beautification this is part of it.

Commissioner Hogsett appreciated Mr. Miller's efforts very much and is a model for the whole city in keeping his property beautiful. He didn't have a good feel for how we would enforce it. He would be interested in what other cities have done.

Commissioner Caflisch said this needs to start with notification by putting it in the newsletter, social media, flyers, once the word gets out a lot of people would change.

Mr. Miller said he liked the idea of publicizing things, but some people won't change until you enforce this.

Commissioner Caflisch asked if there was no mention of a fine in that section.

City Attorney Chubb said it would be like littering, and they will get a record for grass clippings. He said the problem is the grass clippings dissipate when traffic goes over them.

Mayor Ysusi asked what the fine is for littering.

City Attorney Chubb said it is not much but goes on your record.

City Manager Whitehead suggested that education is the best way to go.

The Commissioners agreed that publicizing the issue in the newsletter, newspaper and on social media would be the best route to take for now and see what the results are in mid-summer.

VII. ITEMS FOR COMMISSION ACTION

- A. Consider setting the date of June 27, 2019 at 5:30 PM for a public hearing to consider the condemnation of the structure(s) located at 513 W. Cottonwood Street as dangerous and unsafe.

Building Inspector Cushing reported that this structure had a fire and he is recommending moving along with the condemnation proceedings until the owner decides what he is going to do with the property.

Mayor Ysusi asked how much damage was done to the property.

Building Inspector Cushing said 50% damage.

Motion:

On the motion of Commissioner Hogsett, seconded by Commissioner Caflisch the Commission set the date of June 27th, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. for a public hearing to consider condemnation of the structure located at 513 West Cottonwood Street.

Aye: Ysusi, Caflisch, Hogsett

Nay: None

- B. Consider setting a public hearing for May 23, 2019 at 5:30 PM to consider vacating an east/west alley connecting to Earl Street between Cedar Street and Coffeyville Avenue (a utility easement would remain for the vacated alley).

Erin Timble and OC Castorena, property owners, appeared before the Commission and explained to the Commission their intent to build a garage on one of the empty lots.

Assistant City Manager Passauer explained the process.

Commissioner Caflisch asked if the other owners on the block were notified.

Assistant City Manager Passauer said there will be a publication published 20 days prior to the hearing and that notices would be mailed as well.

Motion:

On the motion of Mayor Ysusi, seconded by Commissioner Hogsett the Commission set the date of May 23rd, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. for a public hearing to consider vacating an east/west alley connecting to Earl Street between Cedar Street and Coffeyville Avenue, with a utility easement remaining for the vacated alley.

Aye: Ysusi, Caflisch, Hogsett

Nay: None

- C. Consider authorizing the City Attorney to prepare an agreement with Community Mission for Improved Housing and the Southeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging for the use of the former EMS building at 225 E. Main Street.

Safety and Code Enforcement Director Cowan presented handouts to the Commission, which are attached and briefly talked about the need for the meals on wheels program. He then introduced Jerry Bright and Cindy Lane.

Jerry Bright presented information about Community Mission for Improved Housing (CMIH), which included;

"It is my mission to bring the community together to help one another. It is my hope that other communities might see what a difference in helping our fellow community brothers and sisters can make in the spirit of a community and to encourage them to develop their own program, ...that is my dream." – Jerry Bright

"Some of the accomplishments of CMIH include:

- 35 CMIH Projects Completed from 2015-2018:
- 22 private homes improved
- 7 shelters/community facilities improved
- 6 fund raisers
- 7 additional private homes currently in process in 2019

"CMIH has provided over \$100,000.00 in kind housing improvements to our citizens in Independence, Kansas. CMIH relies heavily on donations of furniture, lumber, and supplies which they then use when renovating and doing repairs. Currently, CMIH only has a dirt floor garage to store these goods which result in damaged goods from water infiltration."

Mr. Bright stated that his group intended to use the bay area as a storage place for their materials.

Cindy Lane Executive Director of the Southeast KS Area Agency on Aging described their current situation in the building that they are in now and the need to seek better accommodations in Independence for the Meals on Wheels program. Ms. Lane read a letter from Kathy Shepherd as follows.

"Mayor and Commissioners, I am writing this letter in support of Southeast KS Area Agency on Aging and Community Mission for Improved Housing in their request for use of the city owned building at 225 E Main, the City has a unique opportunity to

support two very important programs here in our community who improve the lives of Independence residents. First, I want to address the importance of Meals on Wheels. I believe this is incredibly important for our seniors in Independence. Through my work I help provide volunteers for the Meals on Wheels program throughout the area. Because of my experience I can tell you how important receiving meals through the program can be for our senior residents for all who receive these meals it is a cost-effective way to meet nutritional needs, for many this is the only time they will have contact with the outside world during their day. For some the Meals on Wheels volunteer who come to the home literally saved their life when they had fallen and there was no one other than a volunteer checking to see if they were okay. Studies show that in Kansas we have ten percent of our seniors who are threatened by hunger and 27% of our seniors live alone, eight percent are living in poverty. It is also proven that inadequate nutrition and or limited social contact has direct health consequences that affect the health care system and our economy. Meals on Wheels program are able to feed a senior for an entire year for less money than the cost of one day in a hospital and cheaper than ten days in the nursing home. The seniors who receive these meals are also some of our most at-risk individuals It is my understanding that if this site is not offered to the meals on Wheels program, our seniors will only have frozen meals available to them. You may be wondering why it's important that they receive a daily meal. Studies have indicated that people who receive daily delivered meals show improved mental health, decreased isolation, increased feelings of safety have improved self-reported health and believe their ability to remain in their home has increased. Secondary outcomes have shown people receiving home delivered meals on a daily basis also report reduced healthcare visits and reduced rates of falling which all leads to a better quality of life. If you've never visited our Meals on Wheels site, then you should do so before you make a decision that will affect many in our community. I encourage you to ride along with Meals on Wheels drivers as they go along their daily route and see firsthand the people who wait outside even on cold days just so they can talk to the person delivering the meal and if you think this only matters to seniors I would beg to differ. There are many people my age trying to care for a parent while still working a 40-hour week. Having a meal delivered relieves the stress of the caregiver who is trying to figure out how to make sure their parents have a nutritious meal prepared for them. For the Community Mission for Improved Housing having this site available to them means security to continue to operate and improve the lives of independent residents who can't afford needed home repairs. It will be a place where they can store donated supplies that they use for their projects. It will be a place where they can manage their many projects and a place where they can easily meet with donors. We have all seen the difference Community Mission for Improved Housing has made in Independence and for the residents who have been the benefactor of the service. What a unique opportunity the City of Independence has to make use of this building by assisting two very deserving nonprofit agencies who will in turn help many of our residents to have an improved life. In closing I would say Independence needs this building for our seniors, almost every other community, even ones much smaller than Independence, have a place for seniors to go for congregate meals and to socialize. If we lose our Meals on Wheels site in Independence, we will probably never have it available again. Please consider making this building available for our meals on

Wheels program and Community Mission for Improved Housing and most importantly please consider the health and well-being of our residents who depend on those organizations. Kathy Shephard, RSVP, Four County Coordinator. "

Housing Director April Nutt discussed the need for a place for seniors to meet and socialize. The Independence housing Authority would like to partner with Southeast KS Area Agency on Aging and employ a person to man the hours of it being open as a Senior Center and as it grows they could add additional hours and fund it through grants.

Citizen Patty Rife brought a petition signed by the residents of Penn Terrace and offered her support of the Meals on Wheels program.

Citizen Diane Wullenschneider discussed how the building would be an ideal place for the Meals on Wheels program and as a Senior Center and offered her support on the issue.

Citizen Mike Davis discussed how important it is for seniors to have a place to meet and socialize and offered his support for this issue as well.

Housing Authority Director Nutt discussed the choices seniors must make if they are on a fixed income between food or medication and offered her support for the program to be in the building identified earlier

Commissioner Caflisch agreed that there is a need for the Meals on wheels program but, questioned the amount of the lease.

Finance Director Lies presented a report that listed expected revenue of \$600 per month or \$7,200 per year. The city had originally budgeted to spend \$2,000 for utilities as a vacant building. Anticipated expenditures would increase \$4,000 which would could save the City \$3,200.

Commissioner Caflisch asked if the City is going to fund most of the expense on the building.

Finance Director Lies said the City would maintain our current funding of the building as vacant of \$2,000.

Commissioner Caflisch questioned why the City would be paying the utilities and there is no mention of ADA modifications that would be required.

Finance Director Lies replied that this leased is based off similar leases the City has with other non-profit organizations in City owned buildings. She also stated that the Community Mission for Improved Housing has agreed to make the building ADA compliant with the costs covered by them and they would also be responsible for minor repairs. The City would still be responsible for major repairs such as the roof or HVAC system.

Commissioner Caflisch did not agree that the utilities should be paid by the City.

Finance Director Lies offered to lower the lease payments so that the entities leasing the building could afford to pay the utilities.

City Attorney Chubb offered to draw up a contract with no lease payments and the utilities be paid by the tenants.

Commissioner Caflisch suggested using in kind work on the building that would offset what they would pay.

City Attorney Chubb warned the amount you charge could cause it to be taxed. He didn't want to have the building inadvertently go back on the tax rolls.

Executive Director Lane noted that in most of the communities they are in, the city provides not only the building but the utilities for the building as well.

Commissioner Caflisch agreed with supporting the program but does not believe the taxpayers should pay all the utilities.

Mayor Ysusi asked where their funding comes from.

Executive Director Lane replied that 50% comes from the Federal government, 25% is the State of Kansas and the balance is from Montgomery County and donations.

Commissioner Hogsett asked if they will cook in the building.

Executive Director Lane replied no. She said that the meals are made in Coffeyville but, if the food was not up to the proper temperature, they would have to reheat it in Independence.

Mayor Ysusi inquired about the ADA improvements and the cost for those improvements.

Safety and Code Enforcement Director Cowan replied that the Community Mission for Improved Housing would make those improvements and he estimated a cost of approximately \$2,500

Executive Director Lane added that the kitchen would have to be compliant with the health department and if they need to add anything their agency would take care of that.

Mayor Ysusi asked if there were any leaks in the roof.

Safety and Code Enforcement Director Cowan replied that there is a leak around the skylight, but he believed that caulking would take care of the problem.

Commissioner Caflisch asked who would be operating the senior center.

Housing Authority Director Nutt replied that it would be a partnership between the Housing Authority and the Southeast KS Area Agency on Aging.

Commissioner Caflisch thought the building was ideal but, stated again that City funds could not be committed to this.

City Manager Whitehead suggested that the City doesn't charge rent and to let the occupants handle the utilities.

Commissioner Caflisch wants to check with the appraiser to see if the property would still qualify as an exempt property if no rent was charged for the use of the property.

City Attorney Chubb said that he has that already worked out.

Commissioner Caflisch stated that it appeared to be that an agreement needed to be worked up with all of the parties involved and brought back before the Commission and a decision would be made then.

Mayor Ysusi asked about possible grants from the USDA.

Executive Director Lane said that there are no grant funds from the USDA that would help with the building.

Housing Authority Director Nutt said that there are CDBG funds out there that could help with a community center.

Mayor Ysusi asked if the Independence Housing Authority would support this facility.

Housing Authority Director Nutt said that she would have to ask her Board and she was unsure if they would support it financially.

Mayor Ysusi asked if the Independence Housing Authority could manage the facility.

Housing Authority Director Nutt said that it is a possibility but, she would have to ask her Board.

Mayor Ysusi thanked everyone for their input and asked City Attorney Chubb to draft a proposal and send it to the Commission.

Orlin Smith, a Montgomery County citizen, believes that the Commission is avoiding the Meals on Wheels dire issue of needing a place to operate.

Commissioner Caflisch responded by saying that the Commission is considering allowing them to use the facility and that an agreement needs to be drawn up.

- D. Consider an agreement with the Church of God for ADA improvements at Cypress and Irving.

Safety and Code Enforcement Director Cowan addressed this project.

Commissioner Caflisch asked that some wording be changed to the contract so that it reads, The City agrees to construct a transitional concrete walkway tying the public walkways to existing church entrances serving Irving and Cypress streets.

Motion:

On the motion of Mayor Ysusi, seconded by Commissioner Hogsett the Commission authorized the Mayor to sign the agreement with the Church of God for ADA improvements at Cypress and Irving, subject to the wording change recommended by Commissioner Caflisch.

Aye: Ysusi, Caflisch, Hogsett

Nay: None

- E. Consider text amendments to Appendix B-Zoning of the City Code relating to:

1. Article VIII. Sign Regulations;
2. Appendix A. "Listing of Permitted and Conditional Uses" relating to "Bus garaging and equipment maintenance",
3. Article X. Special provisions applying to miscellaneous conditional uses; and
4. Article IV. Rules and Definitions.

Assistant City Manager Passauer stated that U.S.D. 446 Superintendent of Schools Rusty Arnold came to the Planning Commission and requested this text amendment be considered. The Commission made two recommendations, one, to allow it in an R-4 district as a conditional use permit and another to allow it in a C-2 and C-4 district with a conditional use permit.

Mayor Ysusi said that he had talked with U.S.D. 446 Superintendent of Schools Rusty Arnold about some available sites around town that are already zoned M-1 that would accommodate a facility like a bus barn, but he felt that none of those sites would work for the school district.

Commissioner Caflisch felt that changing with conditional use permits opens up another issue that he is not comfortable with.

Mayor Ysusi agreed with Commissioner Caflisch.

Motion:

On the motion of Commissioner Caflisch, seconded by Mayor Ysusi the Commission denied the text amendments.

Aye: Ysusi, Caflisch, Hogsett

Nay: None

F. Consider approving a resolution to adopt a formal procurement policy.

Finance Director Lies described the purpose for having this policy.

Lisa Richards asked that some definitions and procedures be tweaked a little bit.

Finance Director Lies wanted to make sure that all bases are covered.

After some discussion the Commission decided to table the agenda item to the next scheduled meeting so that they could offer their ideas on wording changes.

G. Consider a proposal from Jarred, Gilmore & Phillips, PA to prepare the 2018-2020 Audits.

Finance Director Lies presented a three-year contract for audit services provided by Jarred, Gilmore & Phillips, PA.

Commissioner Caflisch felt that each year should be reviewable as to each parties' interest in continuing with the contract.

Finance Director Lies asked for a motion to accept the contract with the modified language because they are scheduled to come perform the audit in two weeks.

City Manager Whitehead added that the contract would be subject to City Attorney review and if there was a major problem a special meeting would be called.

Motion:

On the motion of Commissioner Caflisch, seconded by Mayor Ysusi the Commission approved the proposal from Jarred, Gilmore & Phillips, PA to prepare the City of Independence's 2018, 2019, and 2020 audits with addition of a clause concerning termination of agreement, and to authorize City Manager, Craig Whitehead to sign the contract, and revised contract will be emailed to commissioners for review as soon as modifications are completed.

Aye: Ysusi, Caflisch, Hogsett

Nay: None

VIII. REPORTS

A. Preliminary list and maps of City owned properties.

B. City Board Minutes

1. February 20, 2019 Library Board of Trustees.

IX. CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

City Manager Whitehead gave an update on beatification efforts.

X. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Hogsett mentioned the Love Independence Day that will be going on this weekend.

Commissioner Caflisch asked if the Brewery owners were submitting a new drawing of the sidewalk changes, they had proposed at a previous meeting.

City Manager Whitehead said they would leave the sidewalk as is.

Commissioner Caflisch inquired about having a policy that would require the homeowner to be present when water service is established to prevent any major leaks inside the home or business.

City Manager Whitehead said the City is looking into doing something like that.

Mayor Ysusi asked where the City was at with the water line replacement projects.

City Manager Whitehead said that Utilities Director Lybarger has the projects identified but, was unsure about when those projects would start.

XI. PUBLIC CONCERNS

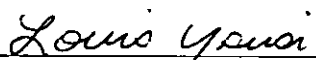
XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

Mayor Ysusi moved to adjourn. Commissioner Hogsett seconded.

Aye: Ysusi, Caflisch, Hogsett

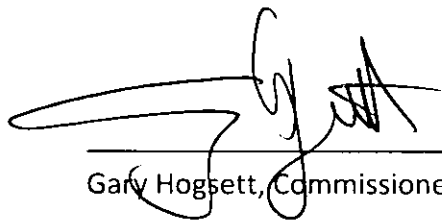
Nay: None



Louis Ysusi, Mayor

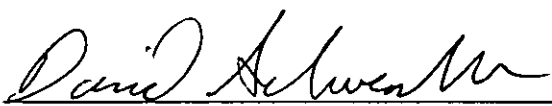


Leonhard Caflisch, Commissioner



Gary Hogsett, Commissioner

Attest:



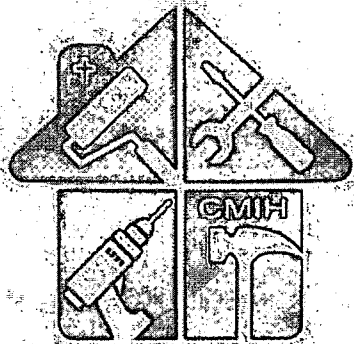
City Clerk/Treasurer

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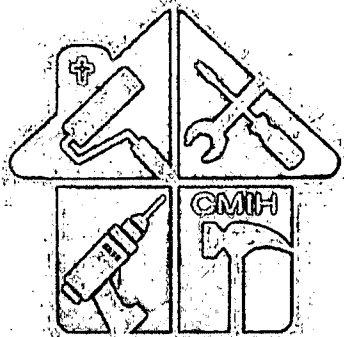
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Tommy's Home – The first project that inspired it all.

2015 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope

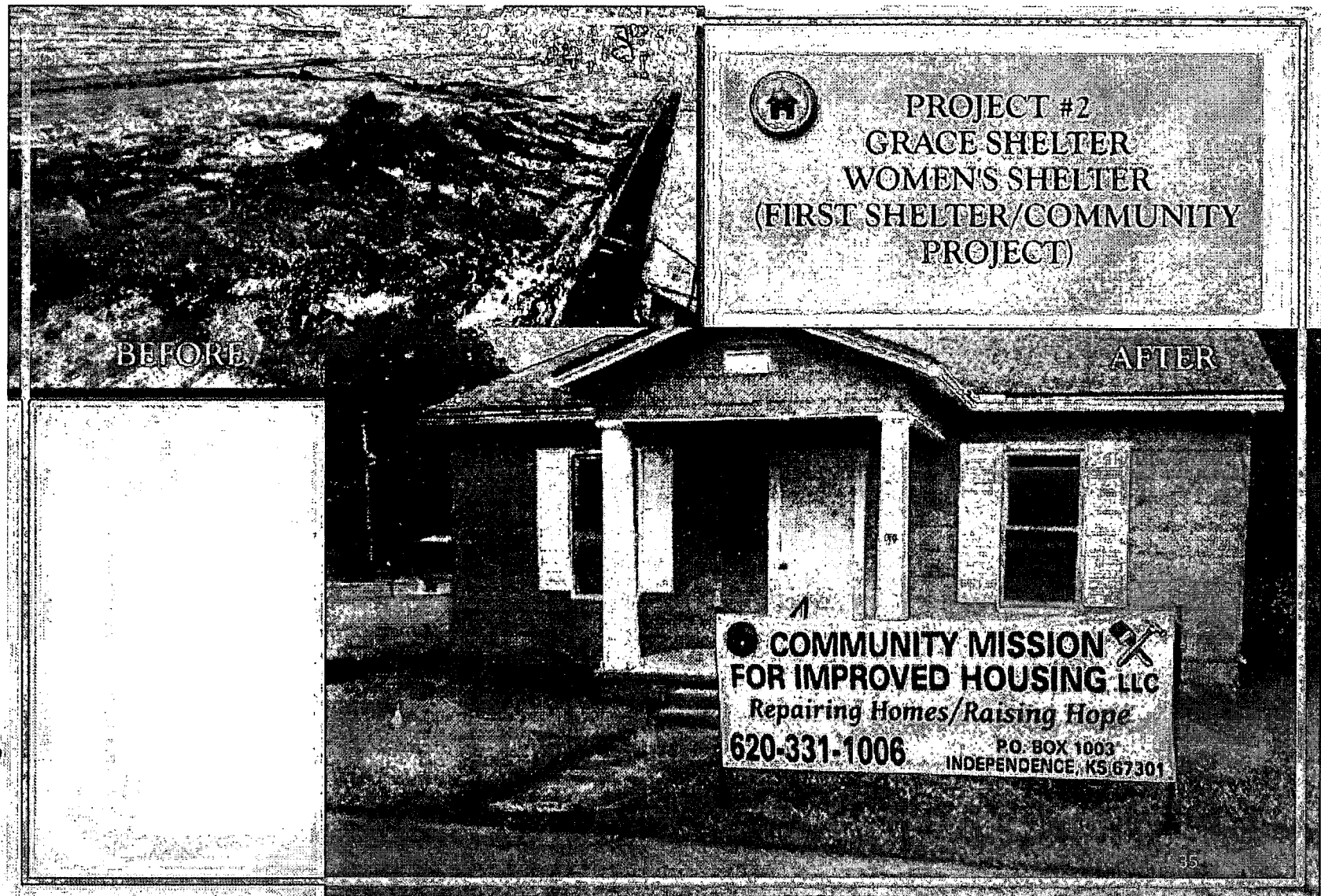
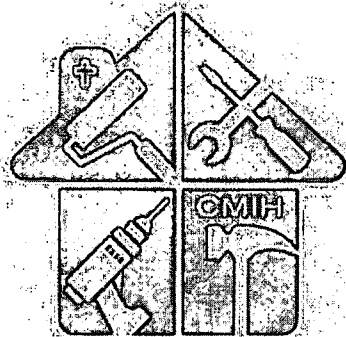


PROJECT #1
INSPIRATION FOR
CMIH MINISTRY
TOMMY'S HOME
(FIRST PRIVATE HOME
PROJECT)



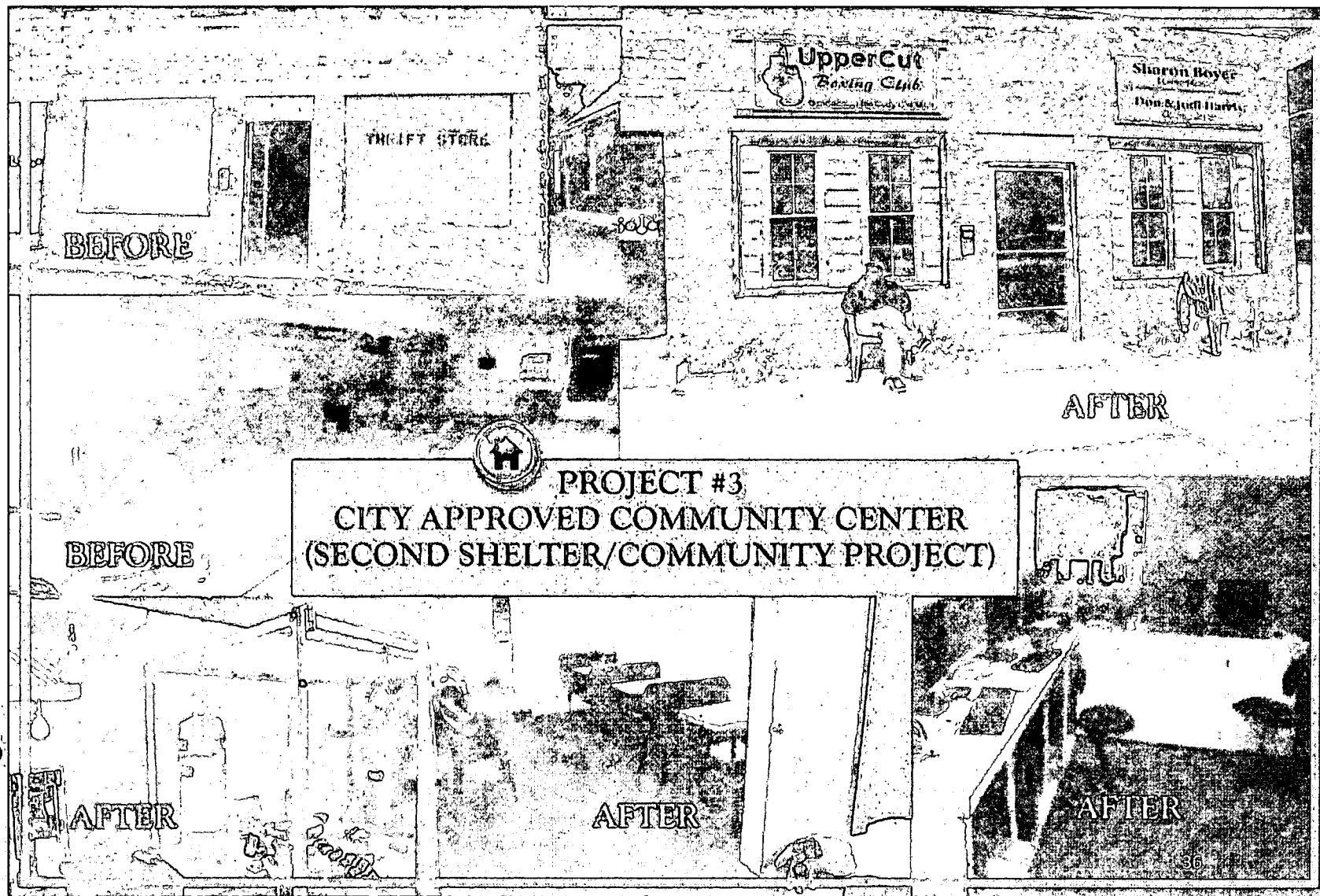
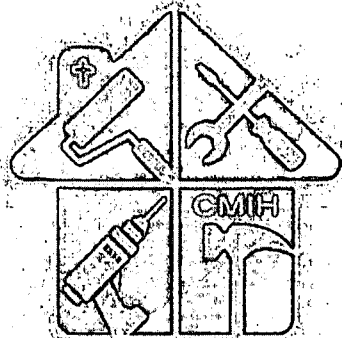
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Raising Hope



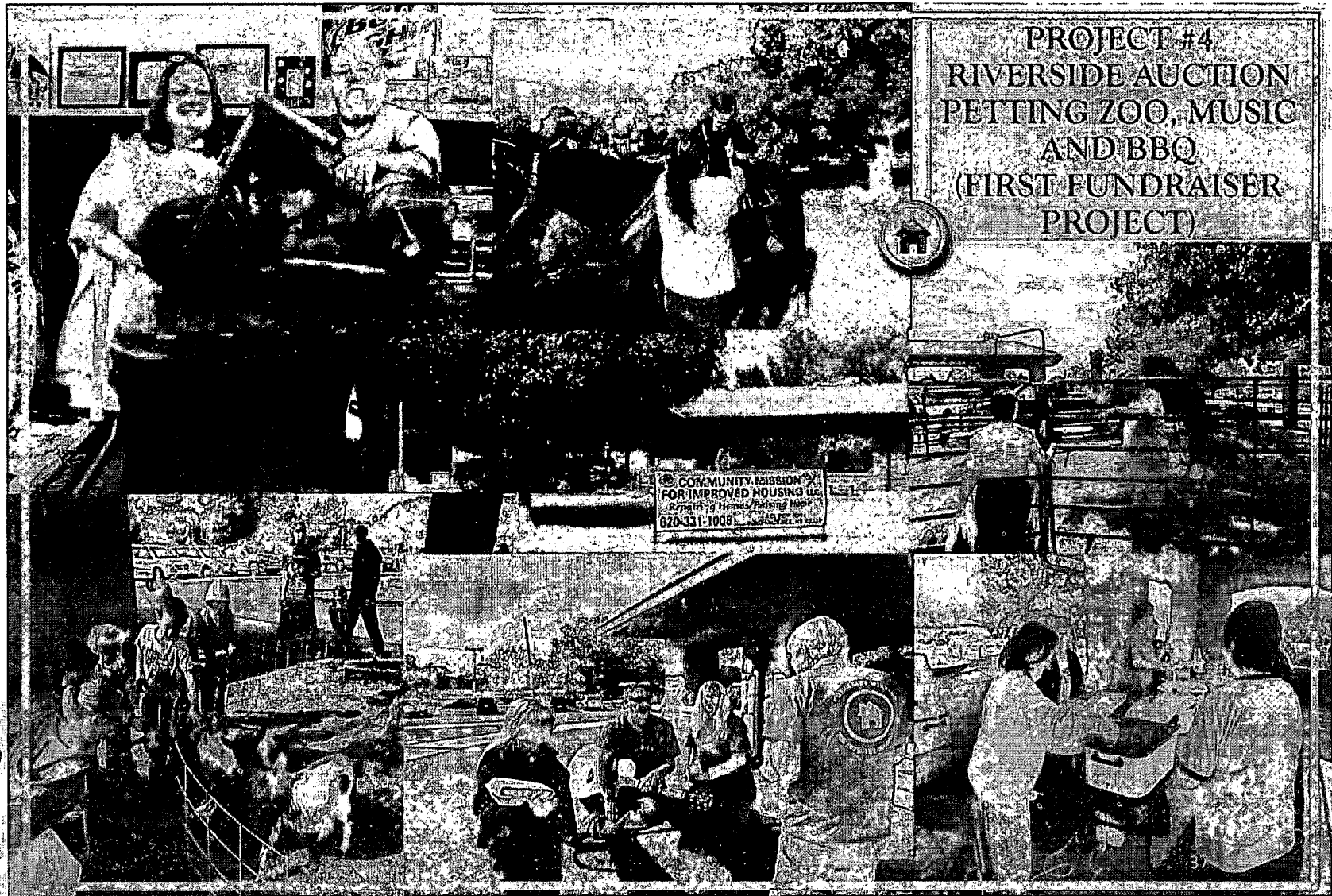
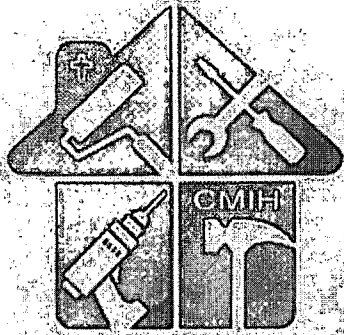
2015 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



2015 CMIH Projects

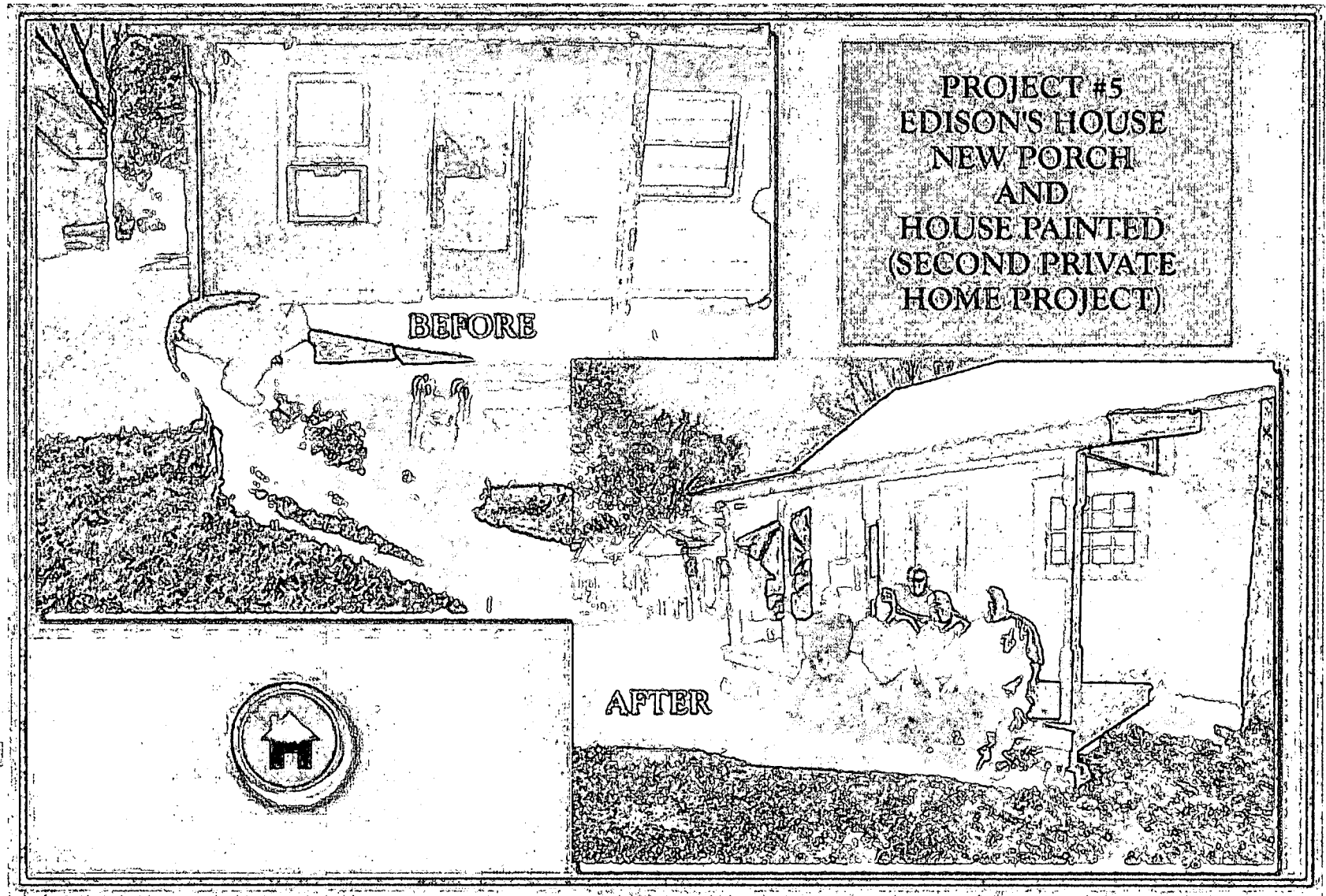
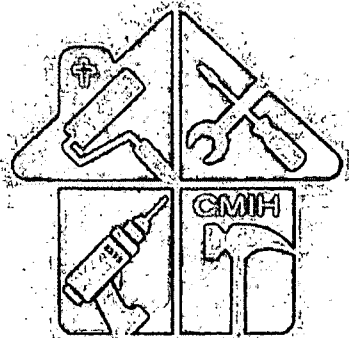
Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



PROJECT #4
RIVERSIDE AUCTION
PETTING ZOO, MUSIC
AND BBQ
(FIRST FUNDRAISER
PROJECT)

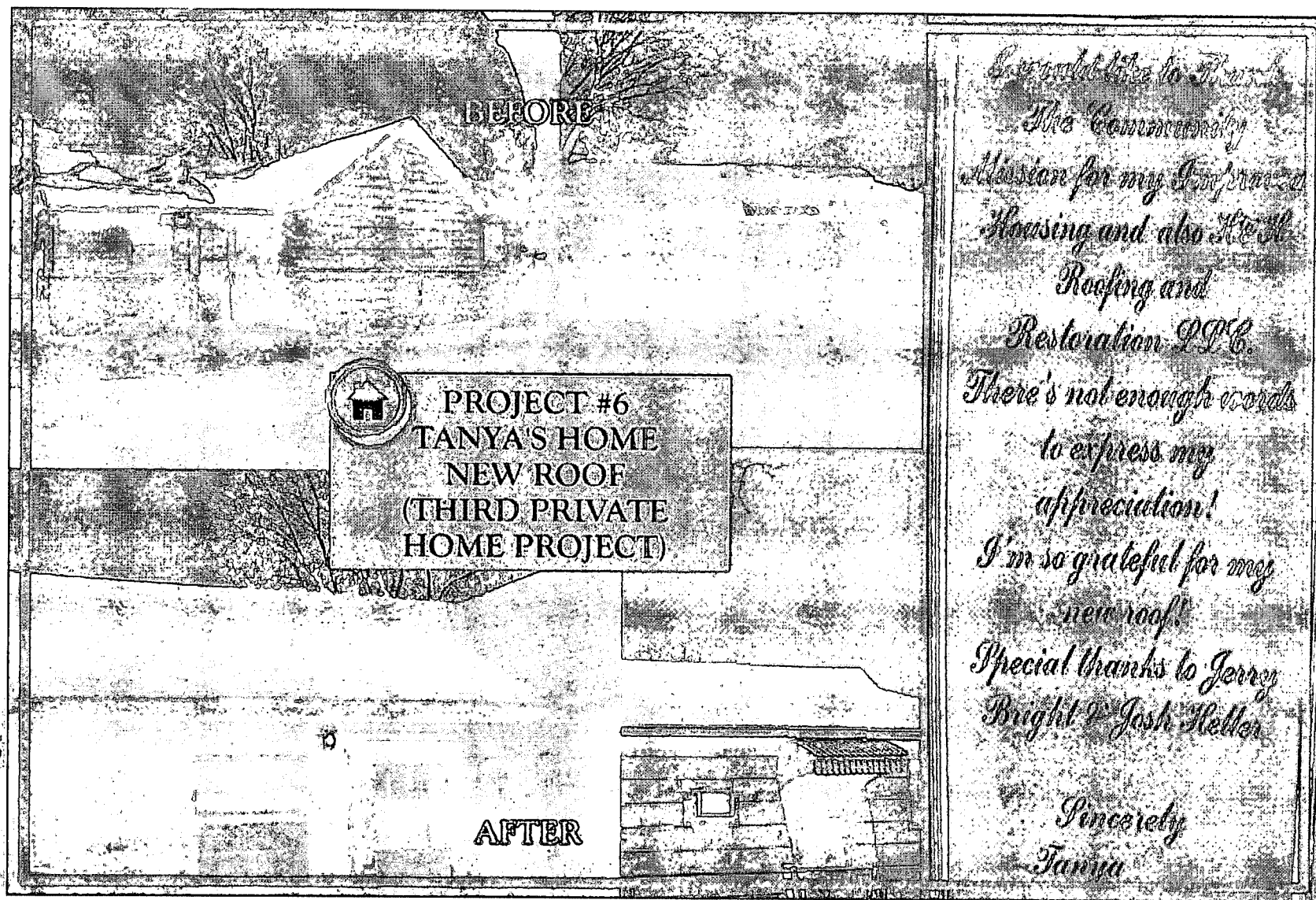
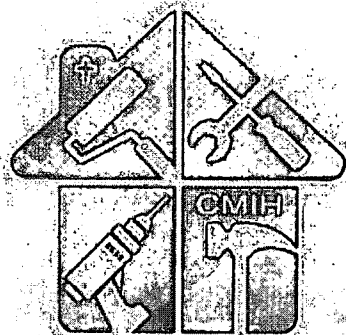
2015 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



2015 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope

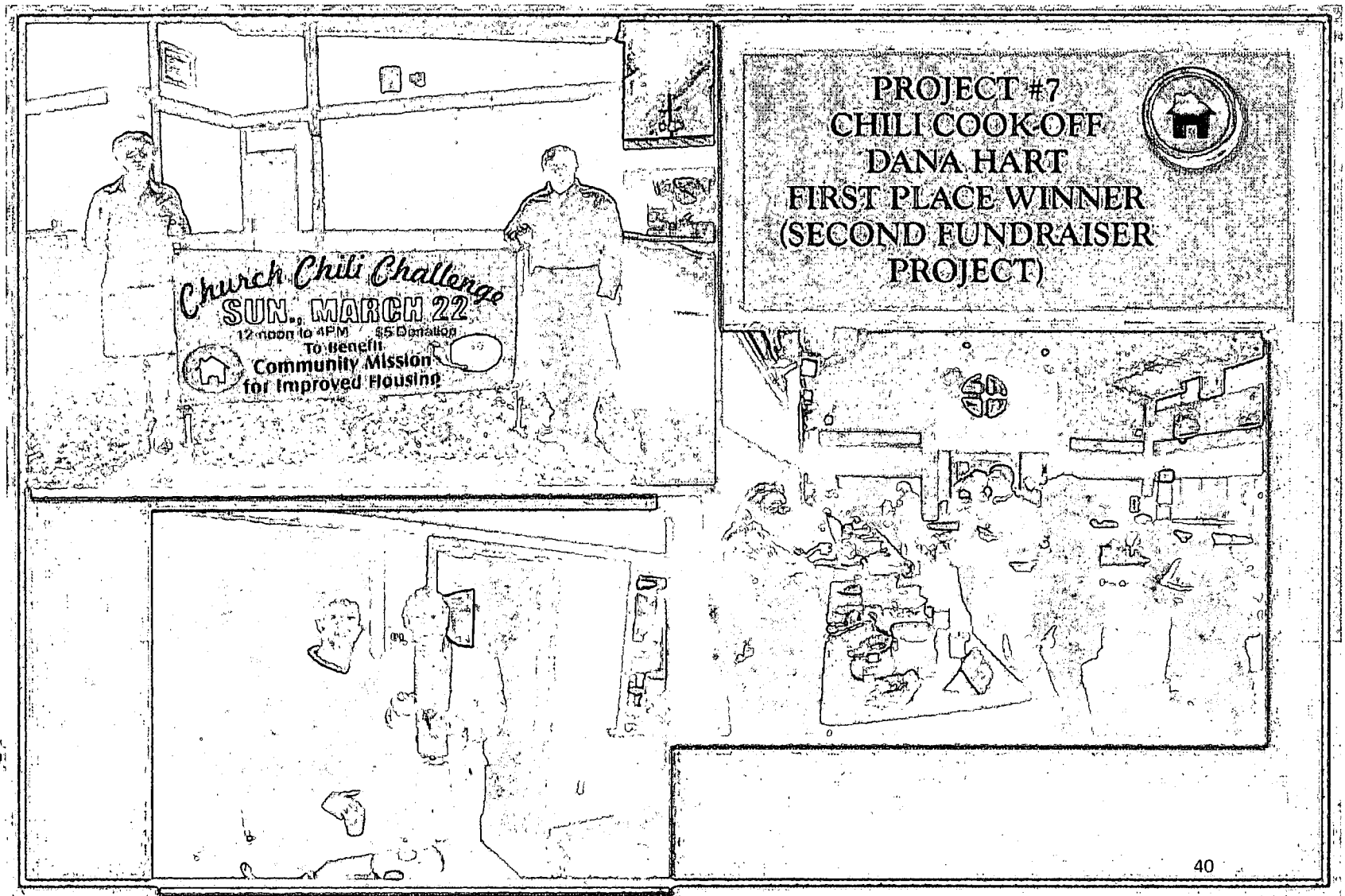
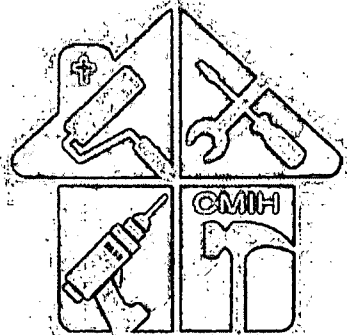


*Over and over to the
The Community
Mission for my improved
Housing and also the
Roofing and
Restoration P.P.C.
There's not enough words
to express my
appreciation!
I'm so grateful for my
new roof!
Special thanks to Jerry
Bright & Josh Heller*

*Sincerely
Tanya*

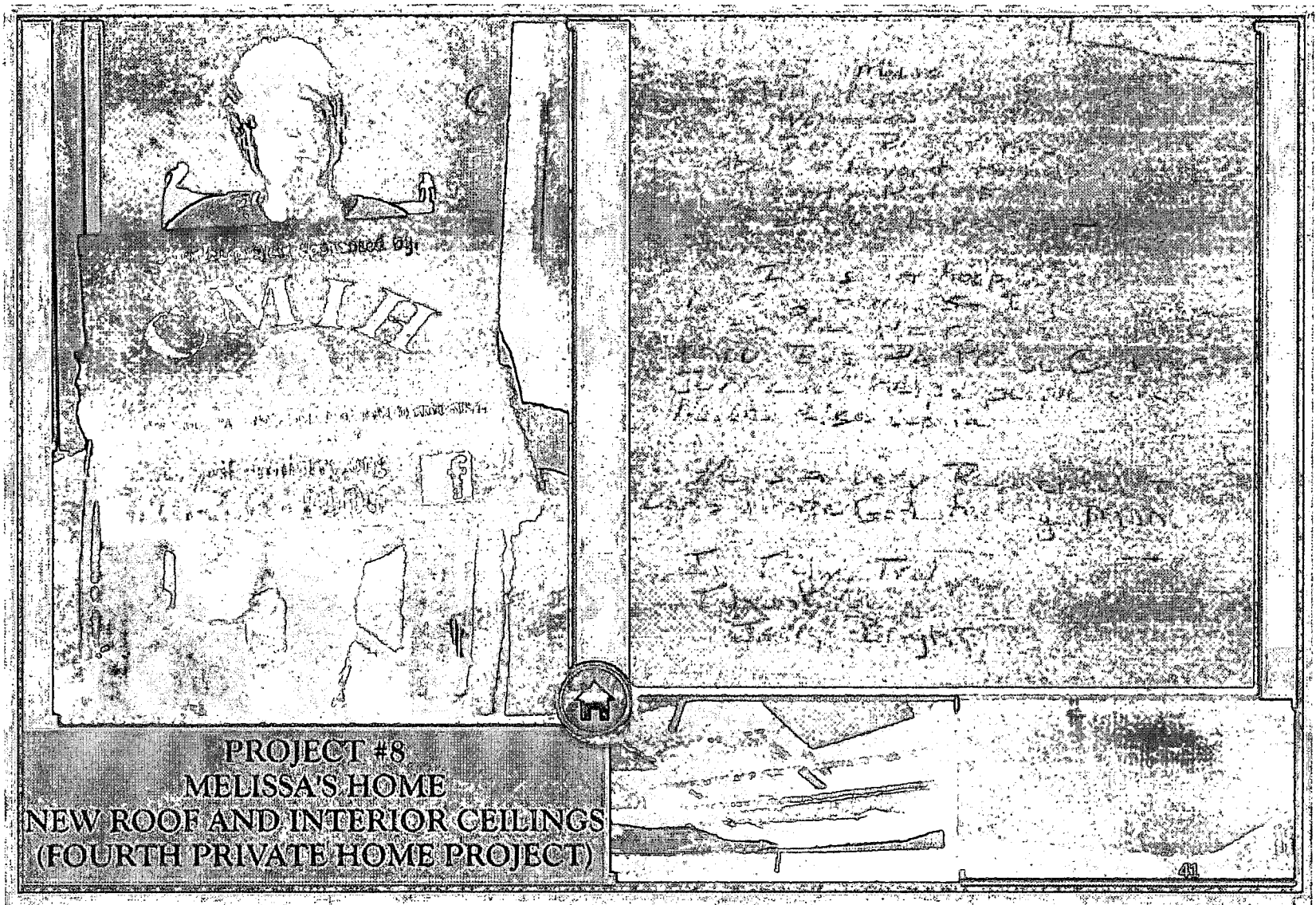
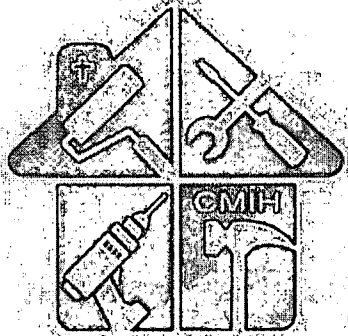
2015 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



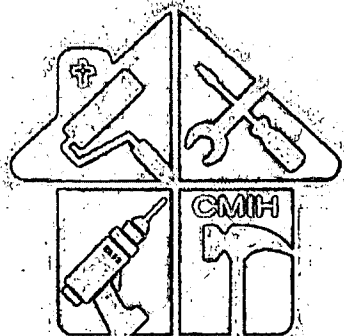
2015 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



2015 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope





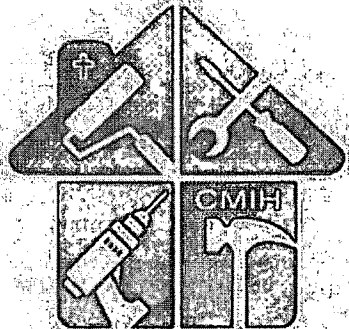
**PROJECT #9
HANNAH'S HOUSE
REMODELED
INTERIOR/EXTERIOR
ADDED FURNITURE
AND A NEW ROOF
(THIRD SHELTER/COMMUNITY
PROJECT)**

I'm writing this letter to let everyone know that Community Missions has been a tremendous blessing to us and we want to thank them for all they have done to help Hannah's House Ministries here in Independence. Not only have they provided man power for remodeling and new roofs, etc. but also they provided a lot of the materials needed to get the houses livable for the women who are in great need. Also much of the furniture in the houses was donated through their ministry. Their ministry has touched many lives and is making a difference in our community. May God continue to bless all you do.

Thanks,
Dick Drummell
Pastor Dick Drummell

2015 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope

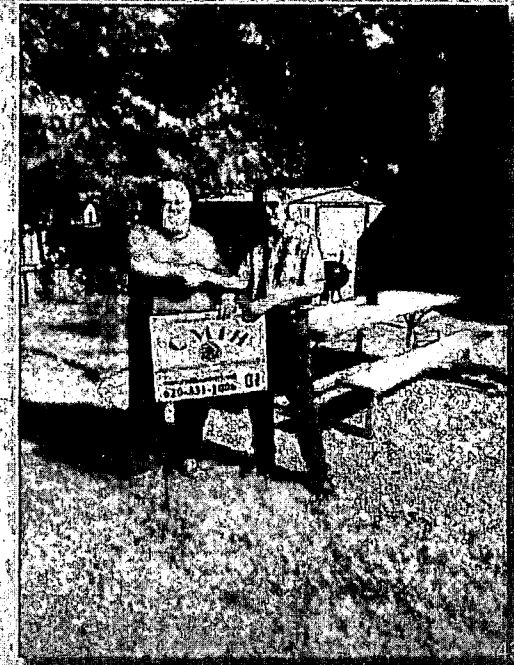


On behalf of HSH board and the residents of Home Sweet Home I want to extend a big thank you to CMIH and especially Jerry Bright, for superintending the roofing and painting project on the shelter house and providing a picnic table.

Your Servant in Christ,
Chris Mitchell

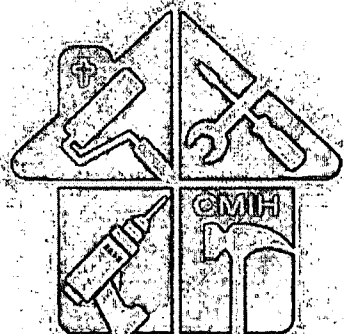


PROJECT #10
HOME SWEET HOME
HSH HOMELESS
MINISTRY, INC
NEW ROOF, OUTSIDE/INTERIOR
PAINTING AND NEW
PICNIC TABLE
(FOURTH SHELTER/COMMUNITY
PROJECT)



2015 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



Locals gather to repair Eloise McCarty home

BY MEGAN GREER
Contributing Writer

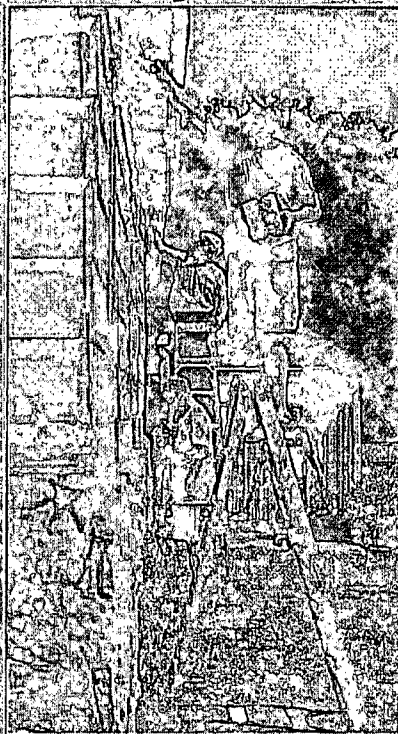
A group of church leaders, city officials, an inmate work crew, and community members took time to come together Saturday morning to help repair the home of Eloise McCarty, 1004 W. Myrtle.

"This is just awesome," McCarty said. "An answer to my prayer that is four years in the making. There is nothing I can do or say to show how truly thankful I am," McCarty said during repairs.

CMIH's Community Mission for Improved Housing is a group of churches from Independence coming together and making this all possible for Eloise and many other deserving community members. The project is run by Jerry Bright, the job coordinator, and Chris Mitchell, the volunteer coordinator for CMIH.

There was a sign on the outside of town that said "Welcome to Independence. A City With Pride." The pride was taken off. We want to put the pride back in," said Bright. A native of Independence, "There was no hesitation from any of the churches we asked. They were more than willing to help in the end. It's all about people helping people," said Mitchell.

There was a total of 10 churches with volunteers helping Saturday, along with some city officials including Independence City Manager Mick Webb, and two Independence City Commissioners, Leonard E. Smith and Gary Heger. "There are two reasons why it's here," Collins said. "First, it's our responsi-



Volunteers with the Community Mission for Improved Housing Jeff Roark, Jaren Miller, Rev. Roland Vega and Sheila Housel paint the house of Eloise McCarty, 1004 W. Myrtle Saturday Morning in Independence. Rob Morgan Staff Photo

bility to help those in need, and second, to serve the people of the community. A house divided can't stand, it's the same with a community. The strength

CMIH making a difference in Independence lives

Can't Get Page A1

other volunteers. The mission of CMIH is putting the community getting the churches out doing something positive together as one to do it. They are looking for some great work. All they want to do is serve the Independence area by helping repair the homes of the poor, elderly, and disabled, and by building relationships among the neighbors, also bringing them hope and spiritual renewal to our community. The Lord is upon us," said Mitchell.

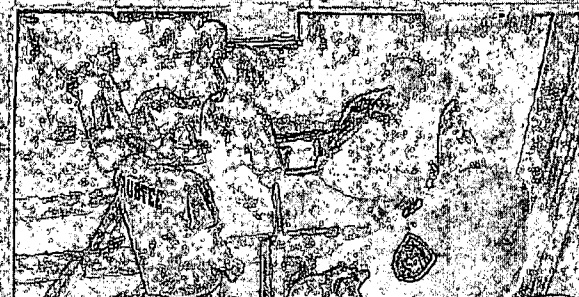
Some of the religious leaders that were out there were Jim Thompson, pastor of Journey Church, David Hentley, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dana Hart, of the Church of the Brethren, Benita Butler, a pastor at St. Paul's Church, and Chlon Myers, pastor at God's Family Chapel. Volunteers included Heger and wife Anna, Montgomery County Department of Corrections Administrator Brian Webb, a neighborhood member of Friends Church, Jim Housel and wife Kathy, Kay Stepien from Western Ministries, and Tammy Martin.

Tommy's house was the first to be worked on, and he has helped every inmate have a helpful CMIH out on lot during their projects.

Collins said he worked right alongside the other volunteers.

See CMIH, page A1

PROJECT #11 ELOISE'S HOME EXTERIOR PAINTING (FIFTH PRIVATE HOME PROJECT)



Members of the Community Mission for Improved Housing Jeff Roark, Jaren Miller, Rev. Roland Vega and Sheila Housel paint the house of Eloise McCarty, 1004 W. Myrtle Saturday Morning during the Community Mission for Improved Housing project. Rob Morgan Staff Photo

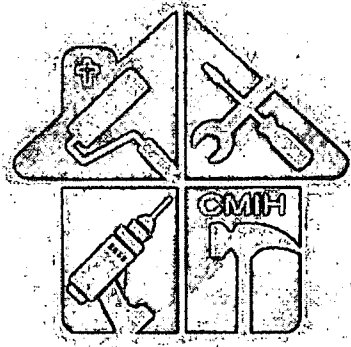


Dr. Peter Housel points during the Community Mission for Improved Housing home repair project. Rob Morgan Staff Photo

Jeff Roark and Jaren Miller paint one of the houses in the back of McCarty home, 1004 W. Myrtle during the Community Mission for Improved Housing project. Rob Morgan Staff Photo

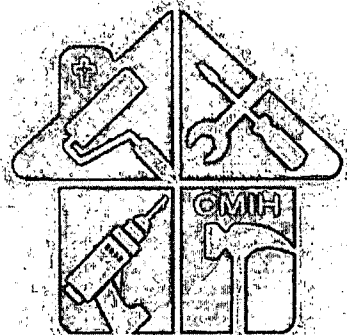
2015 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope

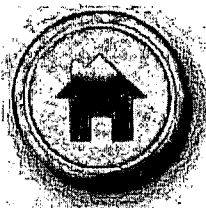


2015 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



BEFORE



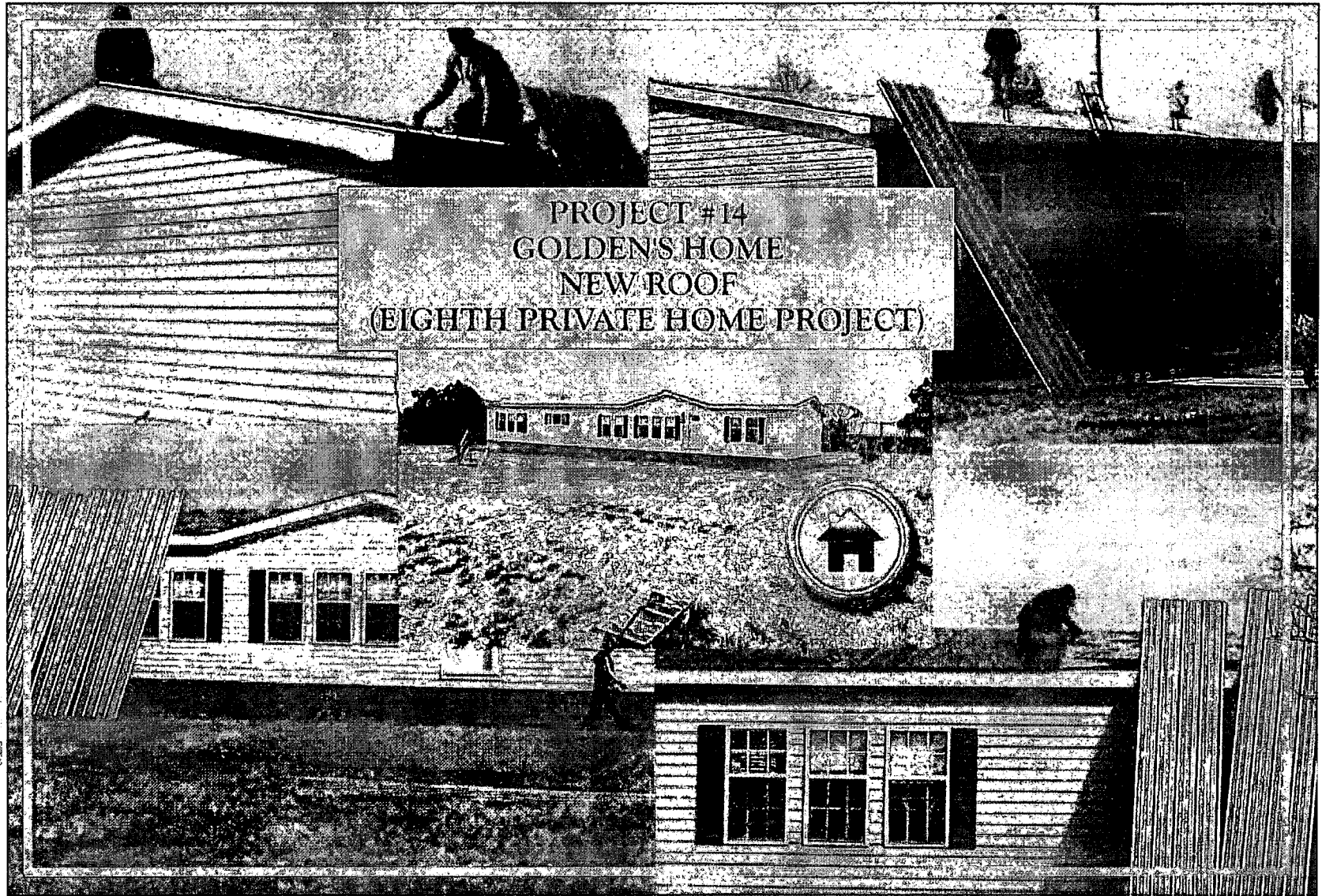
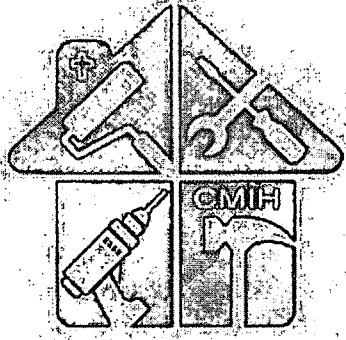
PROJECT #13
GOLDEN'S HOME
NEW ROOF
EXTERIOR PAINTING
(SEVENTH PRIVATE HOME
PROJECT)



AFTER

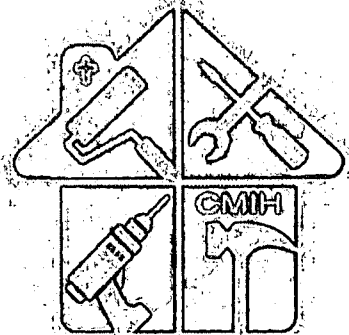
2016 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



2016 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



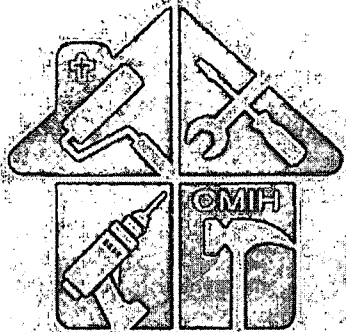
PROJECT #15
CHILI COOK-OFF
RUTH HANKE
FIRST PLACE WINNER
(THIRD FUNDRAISER PROJECT)

CHILI CHALLENGE FUNDRAISER
Community Mission for Improved Housing
SUNDAY, JANUARY 17TH
NOON - 2 PM
Fundraiser for the CMIH Home Repairs for 2016

A large, detailed illustration of a house with a sun in the background, surrounded by various household items and tools. The illustration is in a sketchy, hand-drawn style. It shows a house with a chimney, a porch, and a garden. There are also various household items and tools scattered around, such as a wrench, a screwdriver, a hammer, and a saw. The sun is in the upper left corner, and the house is in the center. The overall style is that of a hand-drawn poster or flyer.

2016 CMIH Projects

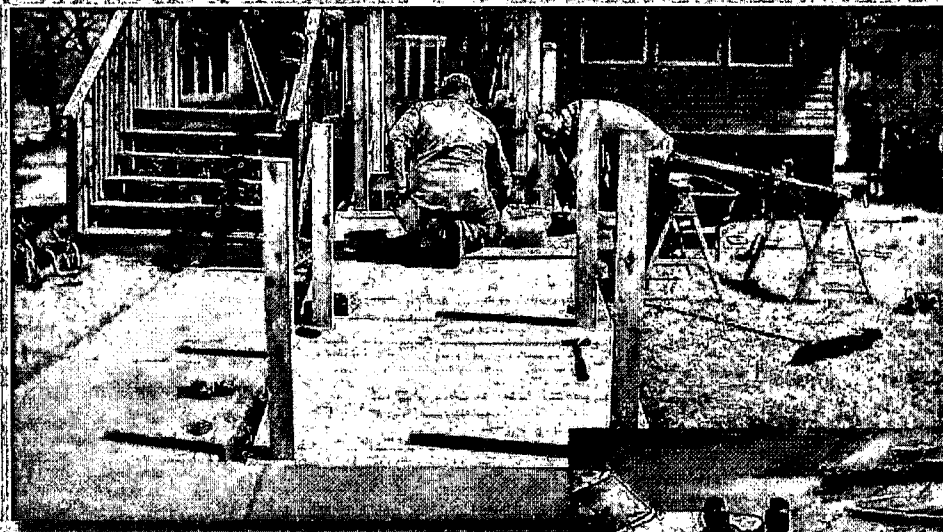
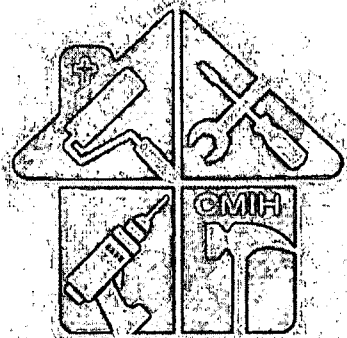
Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



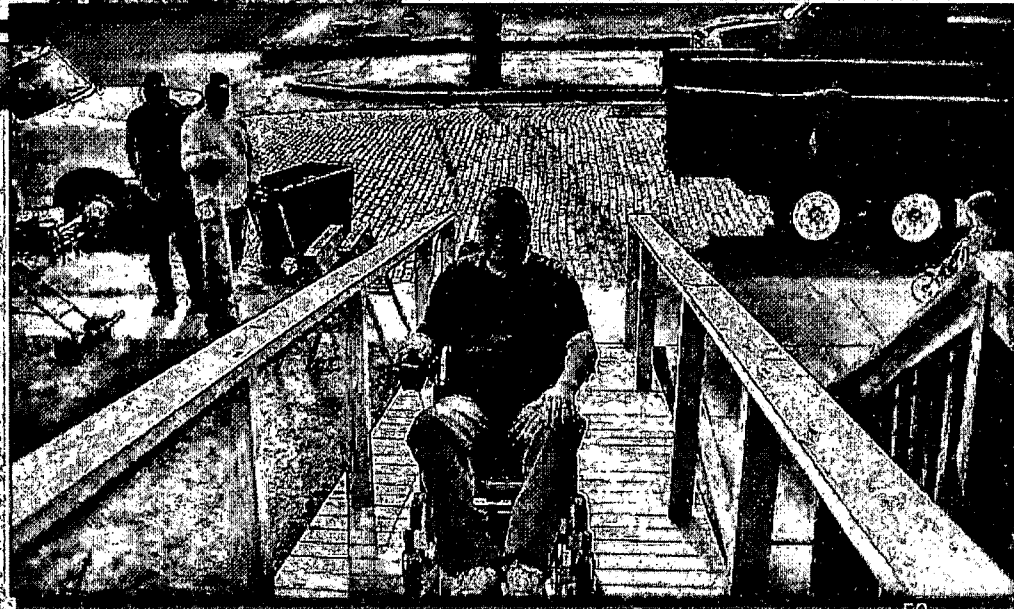
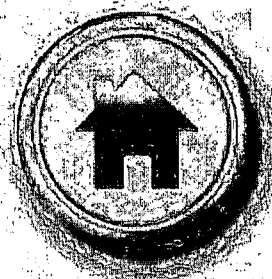
PROJECT #16
SHEPHERD'S HOME
EXTERIOR REBUILD
INSULATION,
NEW WINDOWS AND
SIDING
(NINTH PRIVATE HOME
PROJECT)

2016 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope

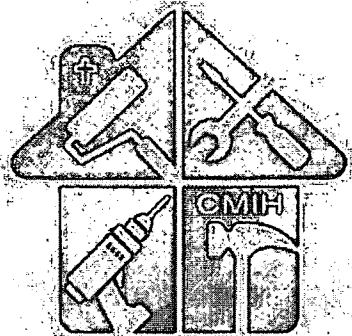


PROJECT #17
ALLEN'S HOME
EMERGENCY RAMP
WITH RAILING
AND PORCH SECURED
(TENTH PRIVATE HOME
PROJECT)



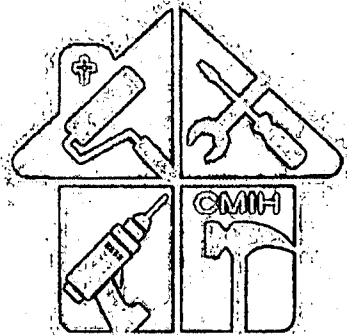
2016 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



2016 CMIH Projects

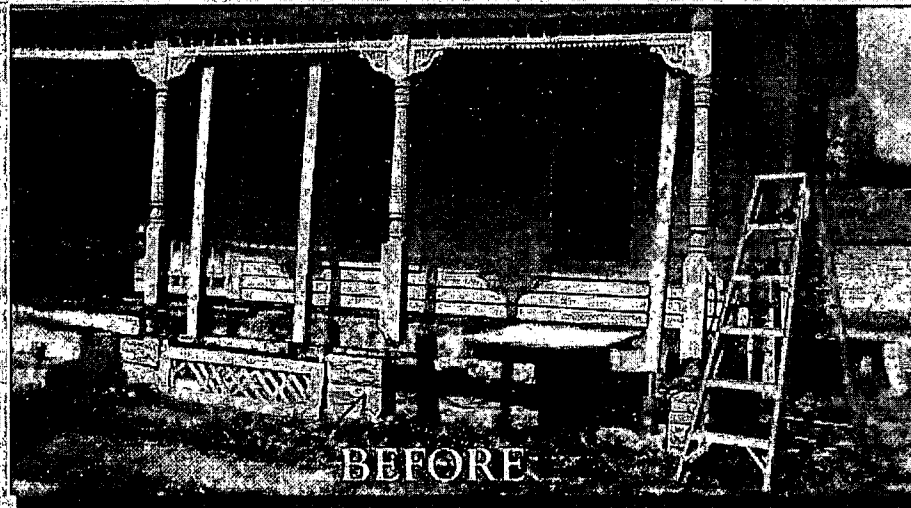
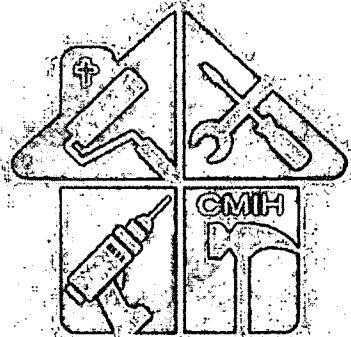
Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



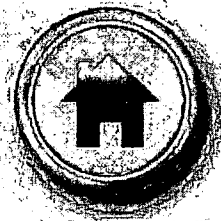
PROJECT #19
LOVE MAIN STREET
PROJECT
NEW PORCH WITH NEW
WINDOWS/DOORS,
DOGGIE DOOR, AND
EXTERIOR PAINTING
(TWELFTH PRIVATE
HOME PROJECT)

2016 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope

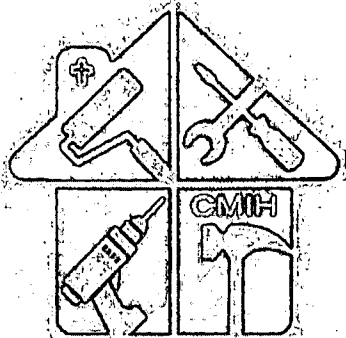


PROJECT #20
LOVE MAIN STREET
PROJECT
NEW PORCH AND
EXTERIOR PAINTING
(THIRTEENTH PRIVATE
HOME PROJECT)



2016 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



BEFORE

PROJECT #21
HOUSE WAS DONATED TO CMIH
THIS YEAR A NEW ROOF
AND PORCH
REMODELING BY
SOUTH ROOFING
INTERIOR AND
PAINTING BY VOLUNTEERS
HOUSE IS DESIGNATED FOR A
FAMILY

(FIFTH SHELTER/COMMUNITY PROJECT)



AFTER



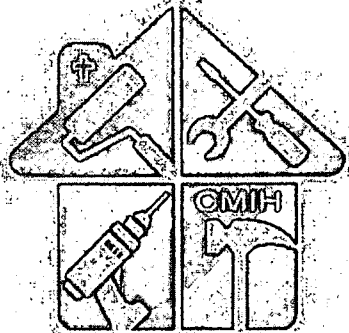
South Roofing and Contracting LLC

1704 W. Main, Independence, KS 67301

Call Today - 316-331-1475

2016 CMIH Projects

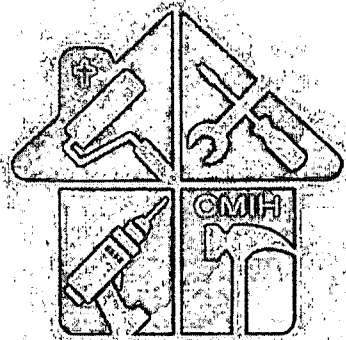
Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



PROJECT #22
VETERAN OF
FOREIGN WARS HOME
NEW RAMP, BANISTERS,
AND PORCH STABILIZED
(FOURTEENTH PRIVATE
HOME PROJECT)

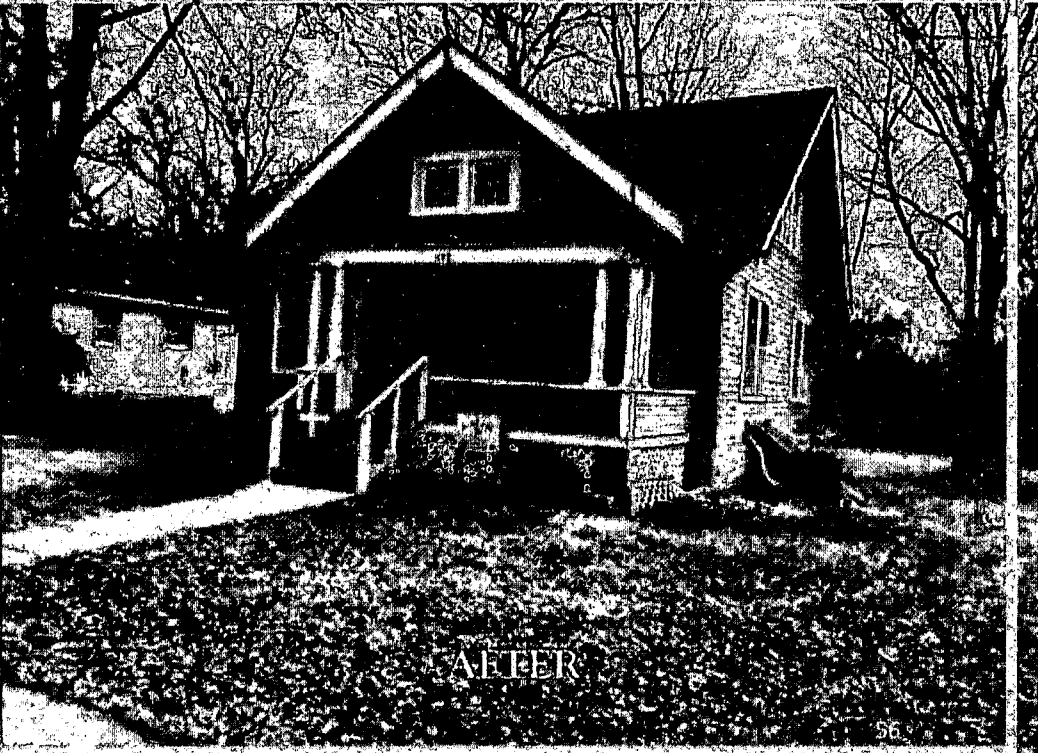
2017 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope





BEFORE



AFTER



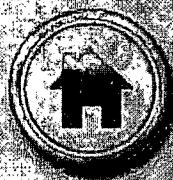
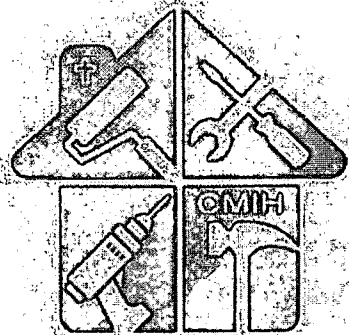
PROJECT #23
HOPE HOUSE
(SIXTH
SHELTER/COMMUNITY
PROJECT)

HOPE HOUSE IS COMPLETED
AND IS DESIGNATED AS A
SHELTER FOR NEEDY
FAMILIES IN MONTGOMERY
COUNTY

NEW SCREENS, INTERIOR
PAINTING, TOTAL KITCHEN
AND
BATHROOM RENOVATION

2017 CMIH Projects

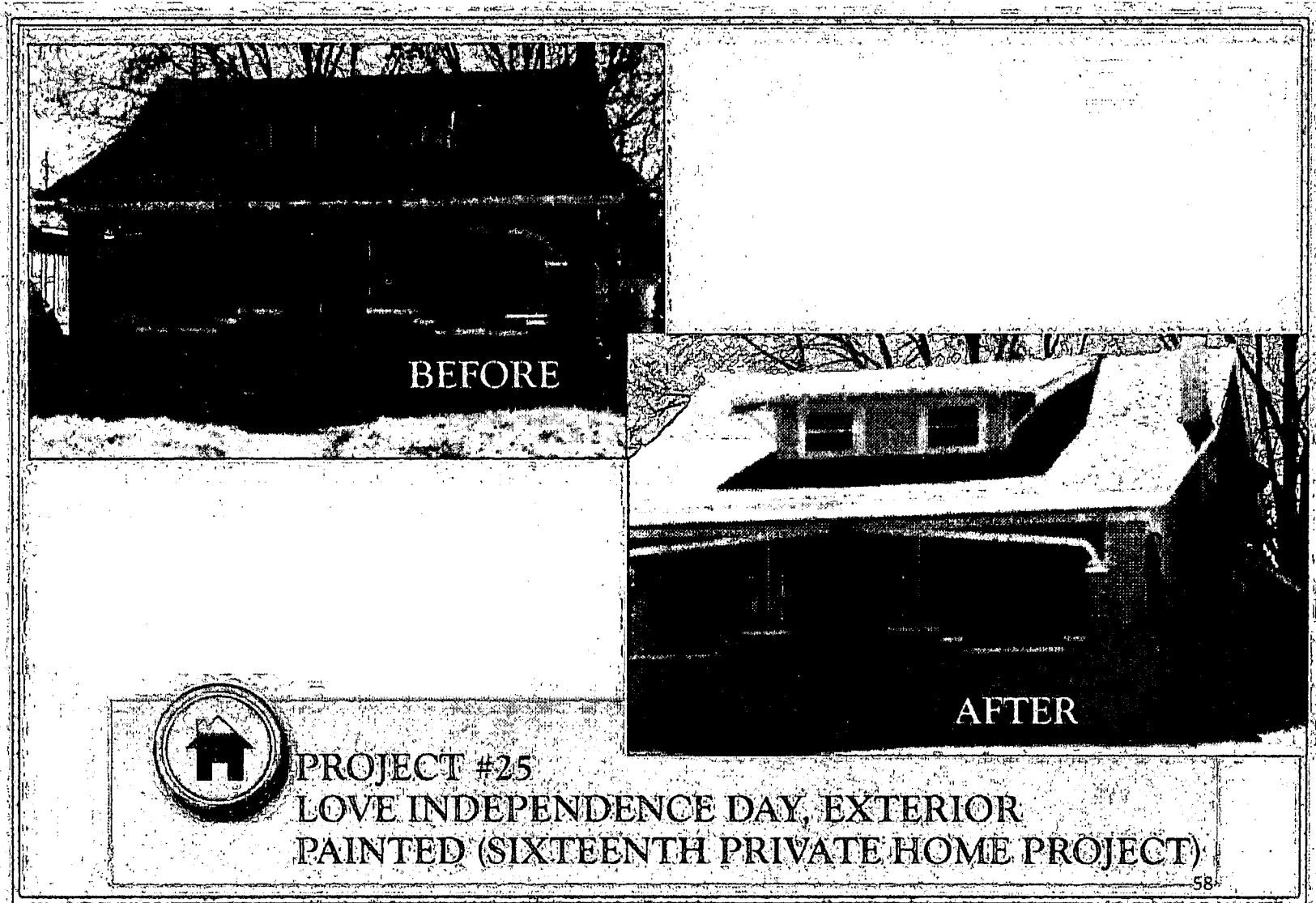
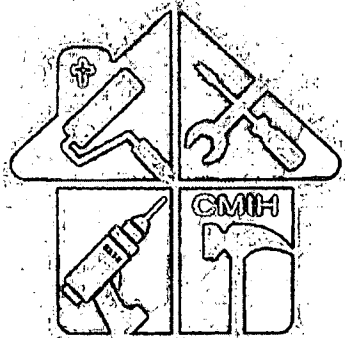
Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



PROJECT #24
WAGNER'S HOME
COMPLETE REMODEL OF BATHROOM
(FIFTEENTH PRIVATE HOME PROJECT)

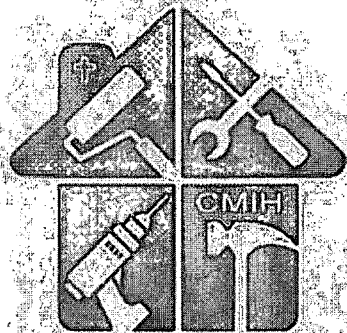
2017 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



2017 CMIH Projects

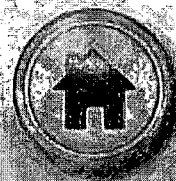
Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



BEFORE



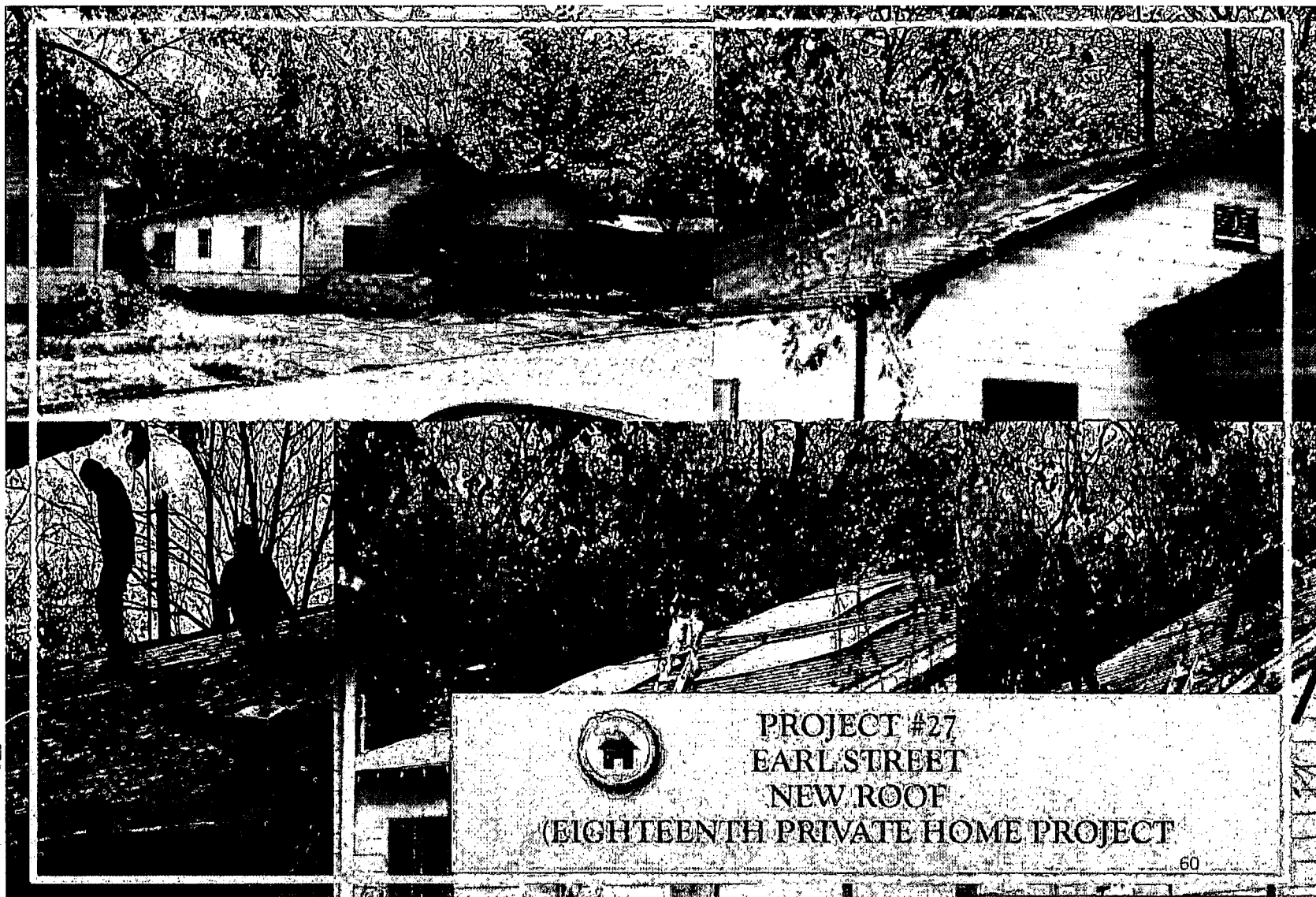
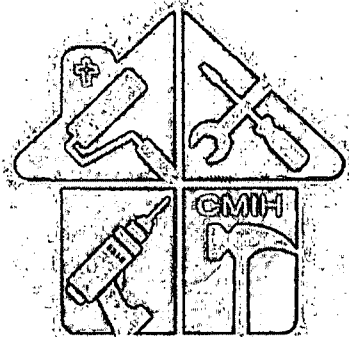
AFTER



PROJECT #26
LOVE INDEPENDENCE DAY (INDEPENDENCE HOUSING
AUTHORITY GRANT FUNDING) EXTERIOR PAINTING
(SEVENTEENTH PRIVATE HOME PROJECT)

2017 CMIH Projects

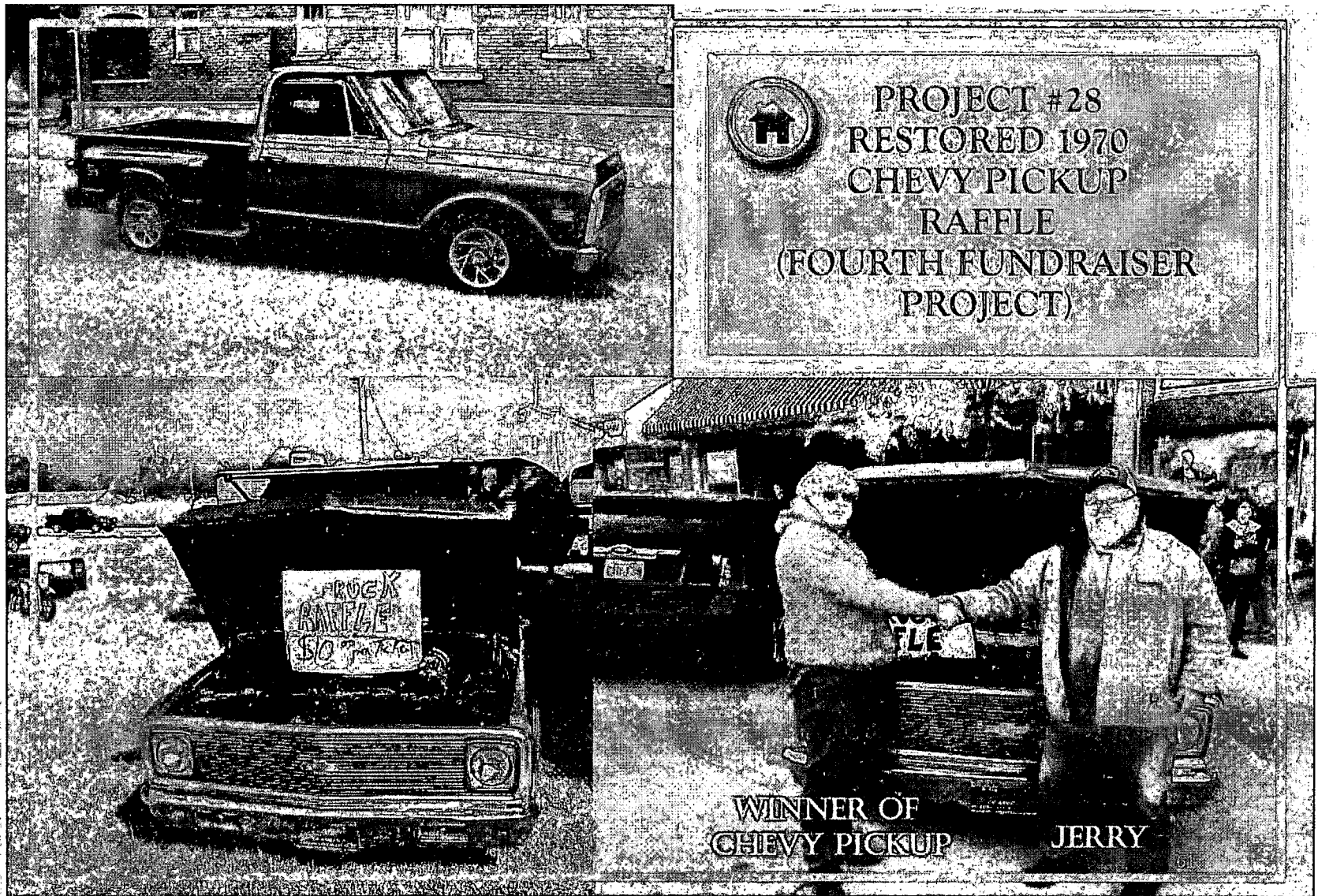
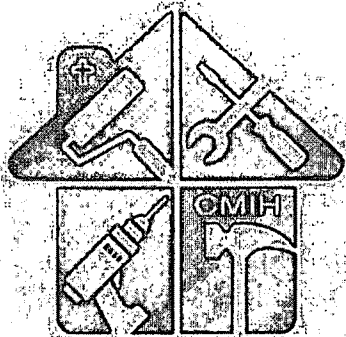
Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



PROJECT #27
EARL STREET
NEW ROOF
(EIGHTEENTH PRIVATE HOME PROJECT)

2017 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



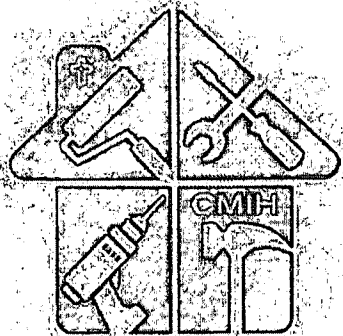
PROJECT #28
RESTORED 1970
CHEVY PICKUP
RAFFLE
(FOURTH FUNDRAISER
PROJECT)

WINNER OF
CHEVY PICKUP

JERRY

2018 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



PROJECT #29 (SEVENTH
SHELTER/COMMUNITY PROJECT)

Lee's Cooling and Heating Co., Inc.

1118 S. 8th Street
Independence, KS 67301
(620) 331-2310

toll free within (620) Kansas area code: (800) 698-2310
emergency services: (620) 331-9719



HOPE HOUSE

LEE'S COOLING AND HEATING CO. INSTALLED A NEW HEATING/COOLING SYSTEM FOR HOPE HOUSE, A SHELTER ACCOMODATION FOR FAMILIES IN DISTRESS. PRIMARILY MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN. CMIH COORDINATED THE WORK FOR THE BENEFIT OF HSH HOMELESS MINISTRY OF INDEPENDENCE. THE NEW SYSTEM WILL HELP SAVE ON REPAIRS AND UTILITY COSTS.

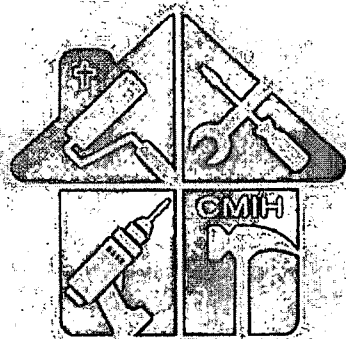
WE ESPECIALLY THANK RANDY VAIL FOR THE DONATION OF THE RHEEM HEATING & COOLING UNIT WHICH MADE IT ALL POSSIBLE.

THANK YOU RANDY, BRIAN AND LEE'S COOLING & HEATING ASSOCIATES FOR YOUR GENEROSITY! COMMUNITY INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES HELPING COMMUNITY RESIDENTS.

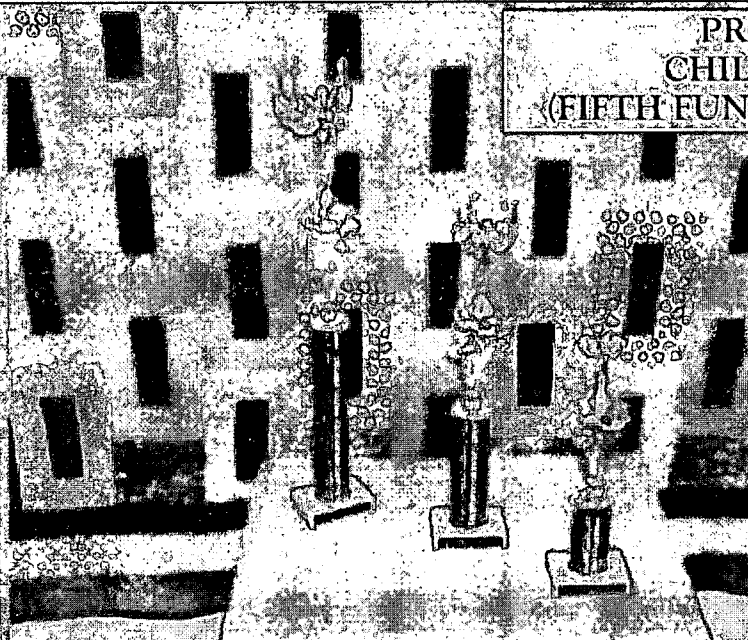
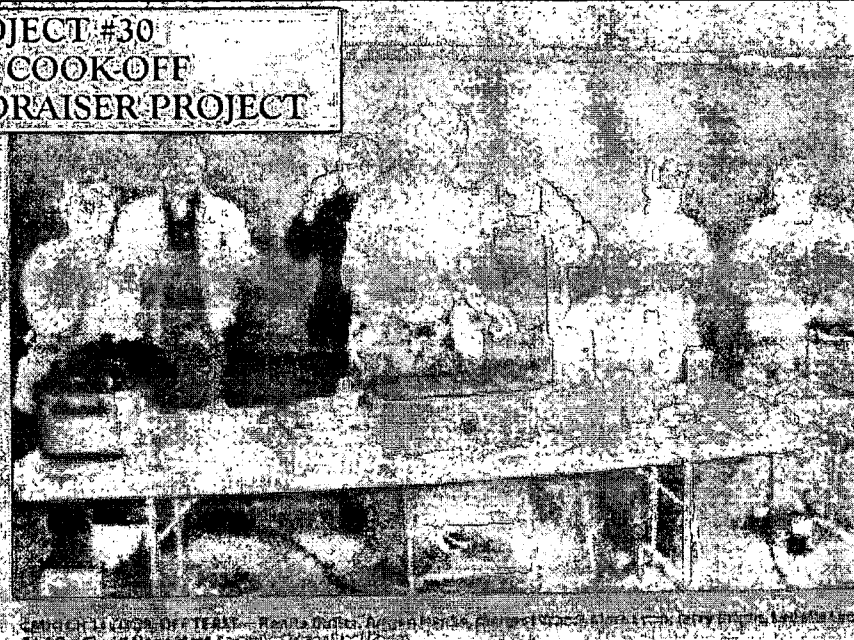
THIS IS WHAT OUR MISSION IS ALL ABOUT.

2018 CMIH Projects

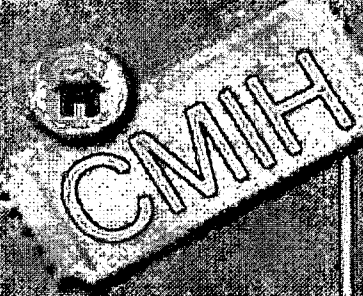
Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



**PROJECT #30
CHILI COOK-OFF
(FIFTH FUNDRAISER PROJECT)**

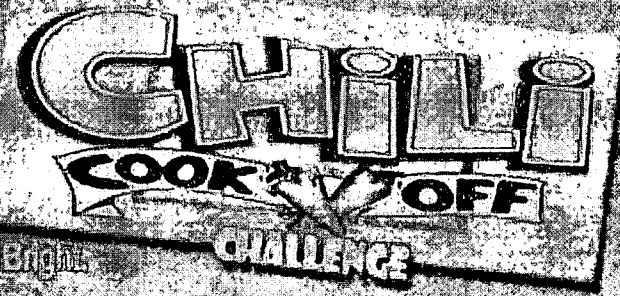
CMIH CHILI COOK-OFF TEAMS: Wendy Dufka, Angela Martin, and the CMIH team. Terry Bright, and the CMIH team. CMIH and CMIH team. CMIH and CMIH team.



**FUNDRAISER
RAFFLE**

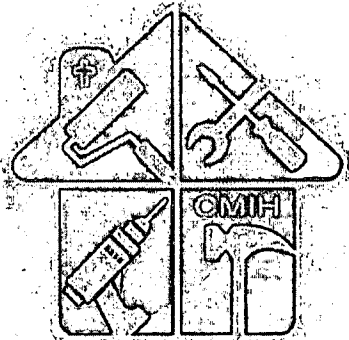
Drawing for a beautiful 6x8 quilt for wall decoration or bed!
Tickets are still available at SKIL office on 107 East Main or from Jerry Bright.

Saturday March 17, 2018 from 10:00am - 2:00pm
Wesley Center, 200 S. 5th Street, Independence KS



2018 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



PROJECT #31
(NINETEENTH HOME)
1212 N. PENN

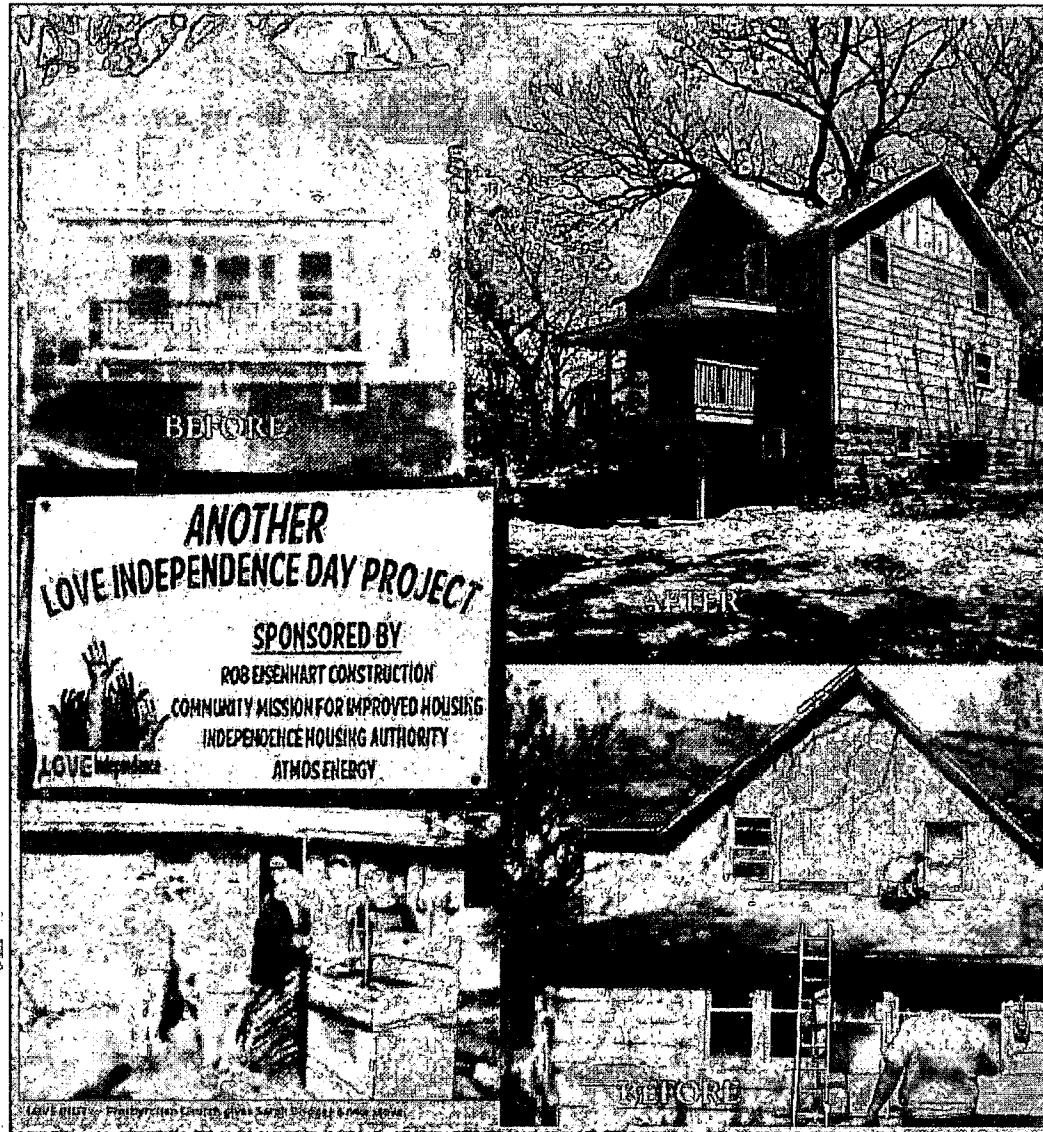
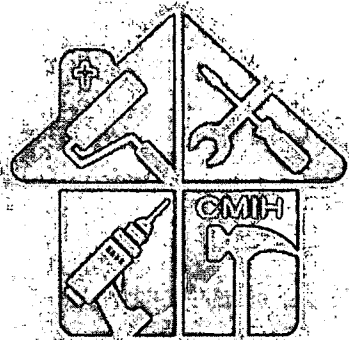
SPECIAL THANKS TO
TEXTRON AVIATION
EMPLOYEES WHO PAINTED THE
OUTSIDE OF THIS HOME AS PART OF
"LOVE INDEPENDENCE DAY" AND

 **FOR**
DONATION OF PAINT
(NINETEENTH PRIVATE HOME PROJECT)

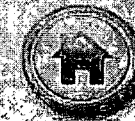
AFTER

2018 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



PROJECT #32
(TWENTIETH HOME)
900 N. PENN



SPECIAL THANKS TO

Westar Energy AND



EMPLOYEES WHO PAINTED THE
OUTSIDE OF THIS HOME AS PART OF
"LOVE INDEPENDENCE DAY".

SPECIAL THANKS TO FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FOR
DONATION OF OVEN AND FOR
ATMOS EMPLOYEE PURCHASING
LOT FOR HOME GARDEN.



FOR
DONATION OF PAINT,



FOR USE OF HYDRAULIC LIFT AND

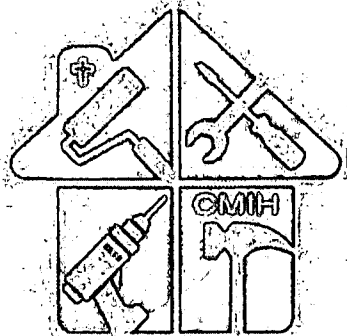
Rob Eisenhart construction

FOR THEIR PROFESSIONAL
CONSTRUCTION SERVICES.

(TWENTIETH PRIVATE HOME PROJECT)

2018 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



BEFORE **AFTER**

**COMMUNITY DRIVERS
FOR IMPROVED HOUSING, LLC**
Repairing Homes/Raising Hope
620-331-1006
P.O. BOX 844
INDEPENDENCE, KS 67351

AFTER

**PROJECT #33
(TWENTY-FIRST HOME)
1007 N. PENN**

**SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL THE
VOLUNTEERS AND TO**

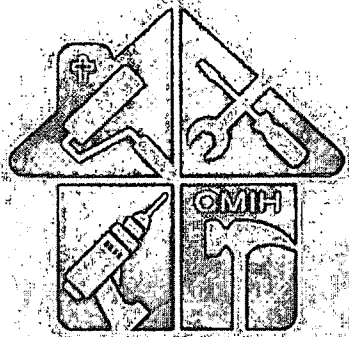
Westar Energy
FOR FLYING THE FLAG AND
FOR THE
**AMERICAN
LEGION RIDERS DRIVING
THROUGH TOWN.**

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Sherman Williams FOR PAINT AND
WOOD FOR USE OF
HYDRAULIC LIFT.

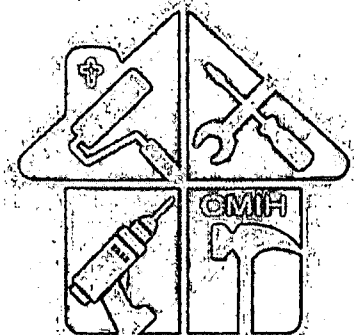
2018 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



2018 CMIH Projects

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



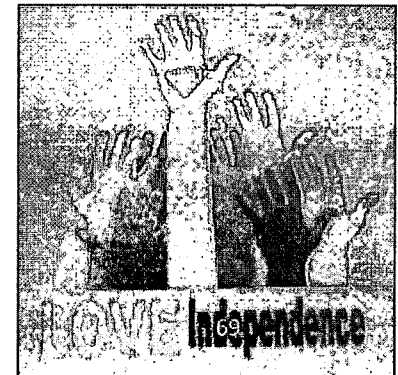
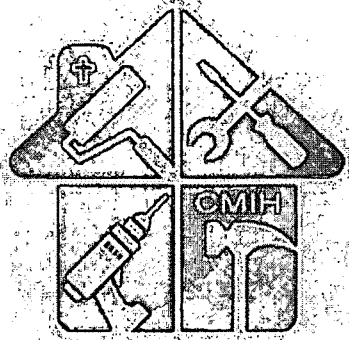
2019 CMIH Projects

As in past years, Community Mission for Improved Housing is participating with the Chamber of Commerce to make "Love Independence Day" a successful endeavor in the Community.

The following houses have been selected for improvement:

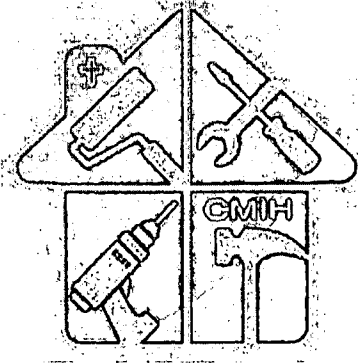
1. 1213 N. Penn – 1st Baptist Church/Woods Lumber
2. 410 E. Main – Bill White Real Estate/Gregg Kelley, DDS/Presbyterian Church/Sherwin Williams
3. 801 E Main – Textron Aviation / Independence Housing Authority
4. 1120 W. Main – Atmos Energy/Westar/Transsystems/Independence Housing Authority
5. 1009 N. Penn – Standard Motors Products/Sherwin Williams/Independence Housing Authority
6. 607 W. Maple – H&H Roofing
7. 1105 N. 8th – Greer Electric/CMIH

Repairing Homes...
Raising Hope



Consider authorizing the City Attorney to prepare an agreement with Community Mission for Improved Housing and the Southeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging for the use of the former EMS building at 225 E. Main Street.

Repairing Homes ...
Raising Hope



- 35 CMIH Projects Completed from 2015-2018:
 - 22 private homes improved
 - 7 shelters/community facilities improved
 - 6 fund raisers
- 7 additional private homes currently in process in 2019

CMIH has provided over \$100,000.00 in kind housing improvements to our citizens in Independence, Kansas. CMIH relies heavily on donations of furniture, lumber, and supplies which they then use when renovating and doing repairs. Currently, CMIH only has a dirt floor garage to store these goods which result in damaged goods from water infiltration.

Consider authorizing the City Attorney to prepare an agreement with Community Mission for Improved Housing and the Southeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging for the use of the former EMS building at 225 E. Main Street.

The average voluntary donation received per meal in February of 2019 was \$1.41.

Meals Provided in Independence Kansas

MONTH	MEALS EATEN AT THE MEAL SITE	HOME DELIVERED
OCTOBER 2017	252	1,637
NOVEMBER	316	1,655
DECEMBER	325	1,585
JANUARY 2018	321	1,687
FEBRUARY	386	1,504
MARCH	206	1,607
APRIL	182	1,442
MAY	257	1,546
JUNE	254	1,497
JULY	238	1,346
AUGUST	263	1,685
SEPTEMBER 2018	232	1,388
TOTAL	3,232	18,579

4/25/2019

TOTAL MEALS
21,811

Outcome Measures (Previous Report)

- Food security
- Socialization
 - Loneliness scale
 - Depression screener
 - Satisfaction with socialization opportunities



- Diet quality
 - Three measures based on nutrient intakes

MATHEMATICA
Policy Research

13

Outcome Measures (Current Report)

- Hospital admissions and readmissions within 30 days of discharge
- Emergency department visits that resulted in an inpatient stay
- Outpatient emergency department visits
- Primary care physician visits in any setting
- Home health episode
- Admittance to a skilled nursing facility
- Admittance to a long-term care nursing home
- Expenditures on Medicare Part A and B services (total and by type)



MATHEMATICA
Policy Research

Consider authorizing the City Attorney to prepare an agreement with Community Mission for Improved Housing and the Southeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging for the use of the former EMS building at 225 E. Main Street.



"Serving approximately 2,000 meals per month in Independence, Kansas, this service will not decrease but only increase in the needed meals over the next 10 years as the aging population is projected to grow by 42%. According to the U.S. Census, 18.4% of Independence's population is 65 years of age or older and is one of the highest percentiles of communities over 5,000 within the State."

Consider authorizing the City Attorney to prepare an agreement with Community Mission for Improved Housing and the Southeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging for the use of the former EMS building at 225 E. Main Street.

- A senior center will allow our senior citizens a location that they can meet and enjoy meals and activities together; plus, it will serve as a gateway to the aging network for vital community services.
- SEKAAA would utilize the senior center Monday through Thursday 8:00a.m. to Noon for the purpose of meal preparation for delivery within the Independence community, as well as provide a location for seniors to eat their meal on site.
- In addition, through the SER program, SEKAAA would have a person who would oversee the day to day activities of the senior center from 11:30 a.m. through 3:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday.



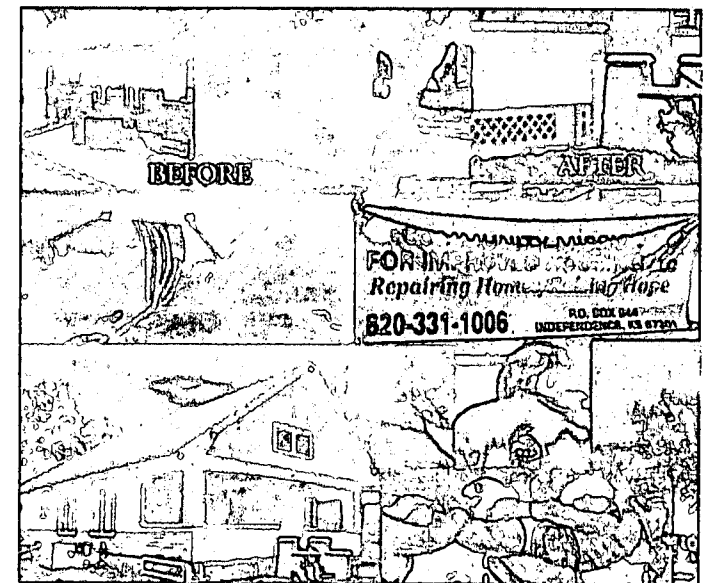
Independence Community-Based Strategic Plan 2018-2023

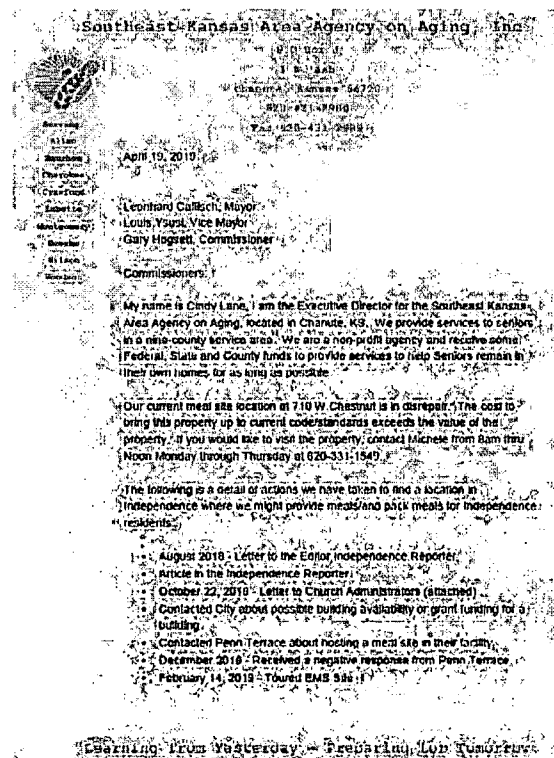
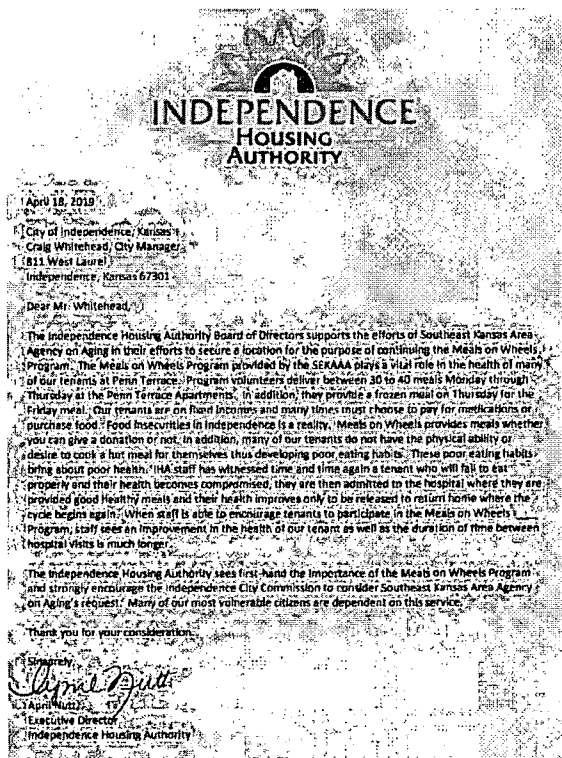
PARKS & RECREATION - "Maintaining a high-quality park and improving facilities and offerings across town will build the City's reputation and provide recreational opportunities to residents."

- Partner with neighbor cities to expand senior citizen activities

BEAUTIFICATION - "City beautification will help enhance our reputation with visitors as we seek to attract potential residents and businesses. In addition, a beautiful community will provide a solid support for economic growth and foster the special sense of community that has developed in our city over many years."

- Expand partnership with LOVE Independence and other organizations/events
- Success looks like
 - Fewer abandoned homes
 - Higher property values





Page 2
City Commissioners

We receive some funding from Aging Mill Levy from Montgomery County which is used as match for the federal dollars we expend in Montgomery County. While the Meals on Wheels program is known throughout our communities. We also provide the following:

ATCR - Attendant care services such as assistance with bathing
(CMEL - Meals in the congregate setting)
CMGTS - Helping individuals coordinate their care
FOOD - Food purchased for an individual
(HMEI - Meals that are home delivered)
HMKR - Laundry and homemaker services
SUPG - Support group meetings for family with dementia

In addition to these services we pay for legal services for individuals who are victims of fraud, having difficulty with debt collectors, housing issues and other items. We do not track the cost by county for legal services (to protect the customer information).

Our Independence participants do not have funds to help pay for the meals they receive. The average donation made to the program by participants or their families is \$0.55 in January and \$0.40 in February of this year.

We have an immediate need to relocate our meals program. If we do not have a community location where our participants can share a meal, we will have no option but to provide frozen meals to the participants of your community. Please let me know if there is any additional information that you need for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Cynthia Lane
Cynthia Lane
Executive Director

Consider authorizing the City Attorney to prepare an agreement with Community Mission for Improved Housing and the Southeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging for the use of the former EMS building at 225 E. Main Street.

Estimated Lease Revenue	\$7,200
Estimated Utility Expenditures	(\$5,000)
Current Utility Budget	\$2,000
Misc. Expenditures	(\$1,000)
Net Budget Impact	\$3,200

BUDGET IMPACT Currently the City budgets approximately \$2,000 for utilities on this facility. An increase in utility expenditures would be more than offset by the collection of anticipated lease payments received as indicated in the chart below.

Consider authorizing the City Attorney to prepare an agreement with Community Mission for Improved Housing and the Southeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging for the use of the former EMS building at 225 E. Main Street.

Mayor Ysusi, Commissioners Cafilisch and Hogsett;

I am writing this letter in support of the Southeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging and Community Mission for Improved Housing in their request for use of the city owned building at 225 E. Main. The city has a unique opportunity to support two very important programs here in our community who improve the lives of many Independence residents.

First I want to address the importance of Meals on Wheels. I believe this is incredibly important for our seniors in Independence. Through my work I help provide volunteers to Meals on Wheels programs throughout the area. Because of my experience, I can tell you how important receiving meals through this program can be to our senior residents. For all who receive these meals, it is a cost effective way to meet nutritional needs. For many this is the only time they will have any contact with the world outside their home. For some, the Meals on Wheels volunteer who came to their home literally saved their life when they had fallen, and there was no one other than the volunteer checking to see if they were ok.

Studies show that in Kansas we have 10% of our seniors who are threatened by hunger and 27% of our seniors live alone, 8% are living in poverty. It is also proven that inadequate nutrition and/or limited social contact has direct health consequences that affect the healthcare system and our economy. Meals on Wheels programs are able to feed a senior for an entire year for less money than the cost of one day in a hospital and cheaper than 10 days in a nursing home. The seniors who receive these meals are also some of our most at-risk individuals.

It is my understanding that if this site is not offered to the Meals on Wheels program, our seniors will only have frozen meals available to them. You may be wondering why it is important that they are receiving a daily meal. Studies have indicated that people who receive daily-delivered meals, show improved mental health, decreased isolation, increased feelings of safety, have improved self-reported health and they believe their ability to remain in their home has increased. Secondary outcomes have shown people receiving home delivered meals on a daily basis also report reduced healthcare visits and reduced rates of falls which all leads to a better quality of life, something Independence has always taken pride in providing.

If you have never visited our Meals on Wheels site then you need to, before you make a decision that will affect many in our community. I encourage you to ride along with a Meals on Wheels Driver as they go along their daily route, and see firsthand the people who wait outside even on cold days, just so they can talk to the person delivering their meal. And if you think this only matters to seniors, I would beg to differ. There are many people my age trying to take care of a parent while still working a 40 hour week. Having a meal delivered relieves the stress

on a caregiver who is trying to figure out how to make sure their parent has a nutritious meal prepared for them.

For Community Mission for Improved Housing, having this site available to them means security to continue to operate and improve the lives of Independence residents who can't afford needed home repairs. It will be a place where they can store donated supplies they use on their projects. It will be a place where they can manage their many projects, and a place where they can easily meet with donors. We have all seen the difference Community Mission for Improved Housing has made in Independence, and for the residents who have been the benefactors of their service. What a unique opportunity the City of Independence has, to make use of this building, by assisting two very deserving non-profit agencies, who will in turn help many of our residents to have improved lives.

In closing, I would like to say, Independence needs this building for our seniors. Almost every other community, even ones much smaller than Independence, has a place for seniors to go to for congregate meals and to socialize. If we lose our Meals on Wheels site in Independence, we will probably never have it available again. Please consider making this building available for our Meals on Wheels program and Community Mission for Improved Housing, and most importantly, please consider the health and well-being of our residents who depend on these organizations.

Sincerely,

Kathy Shepard
RSVP Four County Coordinator