

LUMIEN

The Mutual Aid Issue

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FAITH RINGGOLD

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AMERICAN PEOPLE

MCA MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART CHICAGO

Faith Ringgold, American People Series #16: Women Looking in a Mirror, 1966. Oil on canvas, 36 x 32 inches (91.4 x 81.3 cm). Baz Family Collection. © 2023 Faith Ringgold / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Courtesy ACA Galleries, New York.

WHAT IS MUTUAL AID? AN ANARCHIST PERSPECTIVE

Mutual Aid is a guiding factor behind anarchist practice, and an essential framework for understanding anarchist views on social organization more broadly. So... what is it, exactly?

Well... in its simplest form, mutual aid is the motivation at play any time two or more people work together to solve a problem for the shared benefit of everyone involved. In other words, it means co-operation for the sake of the common good.

Understood in this way, mutual aid is obviously not a new idea, nor is it exclusive to anarchists. In fact, the very earliest human societies practised mutual aid as a matter of survival, and to this day there are countless examples of its logic found within the plant and animal kingdoms.

To understand anarchists' specific embrace of mutual aid, we need to go back over 100 years, to the writings of the famous Russian anarchist Pyotr Kropotkin, who in addition to sporting one of the most prolific beards of all time, just so happened to also be an accomplished zoologist and evolutionary biologist.

Back in Kropotkin's day, the field of evolutionary biology was heavily dominated by the ideas of Social Darwinists such as Thomas H. Huxley. By ruthlessly applying Charles Darwin's famous dictum "survival of the fittest" to human societies, Huxley and his peers had concluded that existing social hierarchies were the result of natural selection, or competition between free sovereign individuals, and were thus an important and inevitable factor in human evolution.

Not too surprisingly, these ideas were particularly popular among rich and politically powerful white men, as it offered them a pseudo-scientific justification for their privileged positions in society, in addition to providing a racist rationalization of the European colonization of Asia, Africa and the Americas.

Kropotkin attacked this conventional wisdom, when in 1902 he published a book called *Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution*, in which he proved that there was something beyond blind, individual competition at work in evolution.

Kropotkin demonstrated that species that were able to work together, or who formed symbiotic arrangements with other species based on mutual benefit, were able to better adapt to their environment, and were granted a competitive edge over those species who didn't, or couldn't.

In today's metropolitan societies, people are socialized to see themselves as independent, self-sufficient individuals, equipped with their own condos, bank accounts, smartphones and facebook profiles. However, this notion of human independence is a myth, promoted by corporations and states seeking to mould us into atomized, and easily controlled consumers, concerned primarily with our own short-term well-being. The truth is that human beings are incredibly interdependent. In fact, that's the key to our success as a species.

Do you ever spend time thinking about where the food you eat, or the clothes you wear come from? What about the labour and materials that went into building your house, or your car? Left to fend for ourselves without the comforts of civilization, few among us would survive a week, let alone be able to produce a fraction of the myriad commodities we consume every day.

From the great pyramids commissioned by the pharaohs of ancient Egypt, to today's globe-spanning production and supply chains, the primary function of the ruling class has always been to organize human activity. And everywhere that they have done so, they have relied on coercion. Under capitalism, this activity is organized through either direct violence, or the internalized threat of starvation created by a system based on private ownership of wealth and property.

Capitalism can inspire people to do many amazing things, as long as there is a profit to be made. But in the absence of a profit motive, there are many important tasks that it will not and cannot ever accomplish, from eradicating global poverty and preventable diseases, to removing toxic plastics from the oceans. In order to carry out these monumental tasks, we require a change in the ethos that connects us to one another, and to the world that sustains us. A shift away from capitalism... towards mutual aid.

Glimpses of the Anarchist ideal of mutual aid can be seen today in communities of open source software developers, and in programmers coming up with new forms of encryption to thwart NSA surveillance. They can be seen in neighbours coming together to organize a daycare collective, and in the aftermath of disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, when in the absence of state institutions, perfect strangers rush to one another's aid. It can be seen in the bravery of the white helmets of Aleppo, who risk their lives to pull children from the collapsed ruins of buildings hit by Assad's barrel bombs.

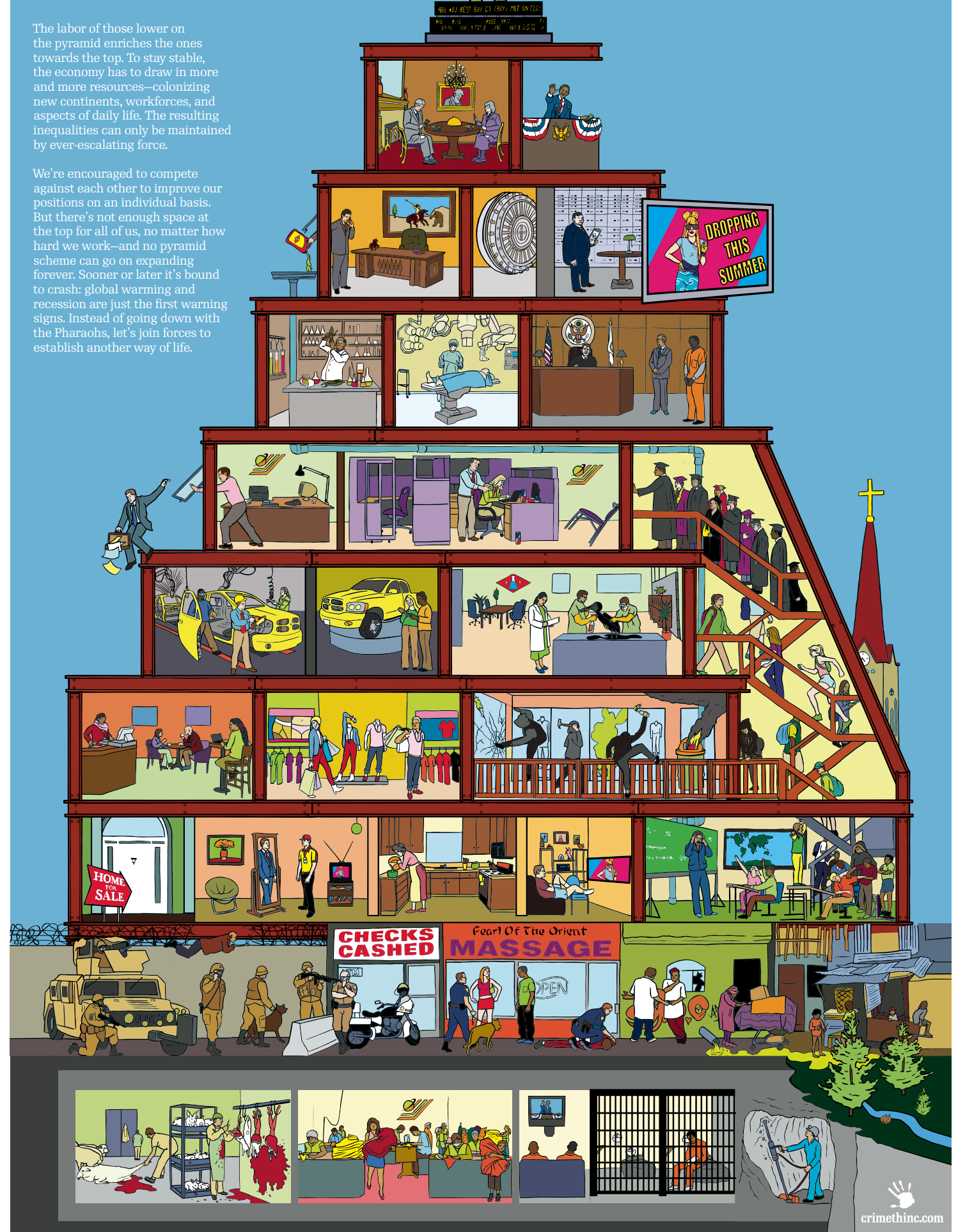
Imagine a world in which human activity was not organized on the basis of ceaseless competition over artificially scarce resources, but the pursuit of the satisfaction of human needs... and you will understand a vision of the world that anarchists seek to create. ♦

What is Mutual Aid reprinted from Sub.media, The Anarchist Library

Capitalism Is a Pyramid Scheme

The labor of those lower on the pyramid enriches the ones towards the top. To stay stable, the economy has to draw in more and more resources—colonizing new continents, workforces, and aspects of daily life. The resulting inequalities can only be maintained by ever-escalating force.

We're encouraged to compete against each other to improve our positions on an individual basis. But there's not enough space at the top for all of us, no matter how hard we work—and no pyramid scheme can go on expanding forever. Sooner or later it's bound to crash: global warming and recession are just the first warning signs. Instead of going down with the Pharaohs, let's join forces to establish another way of life.



KROPOTKIN AND HIS THEORY OF MUTUAL AID

BY MOYA K. MASON

Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921) was a Russian prince, geographer, and self-proclaimed anarchist who gave up wealth and a privileged lifestyle in exchange for one of scientific discovery and political activism. It was his desire to help emancipate his fellow Russians from economic and political exploitation, and did so by writing propagandistic pamphlets, books, and essays. If people could shed off their hopelessness, Kropotkin believed it would bring about a rejuvenation of the human spirit. He wrote:

Nine-tenths of the whole population of grain-exporting countries like Russia, one-half of it in countries like France which live on home grown food, work upon the land - most of them in the same way as the slaves of antiquity did, only to obtain a meagre crop from a soil, and with a machinery which they cannot improve, because taxation, rent and usury keep them always as near as possible to the margin of starvation

Nine-tenths of the whole population of grain-exporting countries like Russia, one-half of it in countries like France which live on home grown food, work upon the land - most of them in the same way as the slaves of antiquity did, only to obtain a meagre crop from a soil, and with a machinery which they cannot improve, because taxation, rent and usury keep them always as near as possible to the margin of starvation

Kropotkin's most famous book, *Mutual Aid*, maintains that cooperation within a species has been an historical factor in the development of social institutions, and in fact, that the avoidance of competition greatly increases the chances of survival and raises the quality of life. He contended that mutual aid is a factor that is both biological and voluntary in nature, and is an enabler of progressive evolution. Without it, life as we know it could not exist. This can be also seen

in the animal kingdom. Horses and deer unite to protect each from their foe, wolves and lions gather to hunt, while bees and ants work together in many different ways. Kropotkin said that mutual support is an established fact within the feathered world, with eagles, pelicans, vultures, sparrows, and other fowl, collectively searching for and sharing food. Some species of birds even gather together at the end of the day to sleep.

Kropotkin also believed that we have a predisposition to help one another, and we do so without governmental coercion. A centralized government is not necessarily needed to set an example or to make people do the right thing. People were doing so before the rise of the State. In fact, Kropotkin maintained that it is government that represses our natural tendency for cooperation. He accused historians of giving little attention to the lives of the masses and their inclination to help each other, offering up instead, a distorted view of civilization through a series of "epic poems, the inscriptions on monuments, the treaties of peace - nearly all historical documents bear the same character; they deal with breaches of peace, not with peace itself".

Kropotkin strongly objected to the Hobbesian notion that defined humanity as no more than an indifferent alliance of individuals who prefer to battle with one another rather than make peace, only prevented from doing so by some outside authoritarian force. He said:

The leaders of contemporary thought are still inclined to maintain that the masses had little concern in the evolution of the sociable institutions of man, and that all the progress made in this direction was due to the intellectual, political, and military leaders of the inert masses



The naturalist, Thomas H. Huxley, championed the philosophy of Hobbes in Kropotkin's day, particularly in his 1888 essay, "The Struggle for Existence", which promoted an ideology that saw struggle, fighting, and competition as the most important tenets in the survival and evolution of human society. Kropotkin asserted that Huxley's interpretation of Darwinian theory was misconstrued and inaccurate, and viewed Huxley's school of Hobbesian arguments as "taking possession of Darwin's terminology rather than his leading ideas". The publication of Huxley's essay was the impetus for Kropotkin to begin writing *Mutual Aid* as a reply to Huxley, and the subsequent series of articles that eventually made up the book were originally published in the same journal, *Nineteenth Century*.

An interesting point that Kropotkin makes in the book concerns the guilds of the Middle Ages. He discusses temporary guilds of cooperative, just in time groups, formed by the union of like-minded individuals, who shared a common goal and space. These groups could be found aboard ships, at the building sites of large-scale public projects, such as cathedrals, and anywhere where "fishermen, hunters, travelling merchants, builders, or settled craftsmen came together for a common pursuit". These examples of temporary guilds can be seen as Smart Mobs, where cooperative groups are spontaneously formed in order to fulfill a common goal, the only difference being the loss of distance due to the rise of mobile communications. The formation of temporary guilds on board ships is a good example of dynamic cooperation in a mobile situation. After leaving port, the captain would gather the crew and passengers on deck, telling them they were all in this together, and that the success of the voyage was dependent upon all of them working as one. Everyone on board would then elect a "governor" and "enforcers," who would gather "taxes" from those who broke the rules. At the end of the voyage, the levies would be given to the poor in the port city.

The emergence of these types of collaborative techniques made possible new forms of cooperation, and therefore, expanded the ways in which people could succeed and survive more efficiently and effectively. Self-sacrifice and loyalty to a common cause and concern for the well being of the whole, were the norm within these on the fly cooperative communities. This could be seen

not only in associations, societies, brotherhoods, and guilds, but also in neighborhoods, towns, villages, and cities, with mutual aid being a prerequisite for survival among the working classes throughout the evolution of civilization. Solidarity is central to mutual aid and remains strong, even when government control, power, and bureaucracy seem destined to pit one against the other with the hope that it can suppress initiative. Instead, strangers are seen helping each other. Peasant women of Russia gave bread and apples to German and Austrian prisoners of war during WWI, and tended to the wounded, regardless of their nationality.

In *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, Kropotkin talked about his vision of a technological and scientific utopia, where people would be freed from toil, poverty, and struggle by the development of machinery and tools that would do at least some of the work for them, and cut down on the time it takes to do the rest of the work. For Kropotkin, tools and techniques were a means to an end. He would probably view the emergence of mobile cooperation as a natural extension of the evolution of mutual aid—just another technology allowing us to come together for common causes in an independent and dynamic fashion to aid each other. Cooperation has always been at the heart of the creation of human society. As technology progresses, so do the ways and means that people have to help others for the well being of the species. Kropotkin would say that nothing has changed. ♦

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Reprinted from www.moyak.com

It is not love to my neighbour — whom I often do not know at all — which induces me to seize a pail of water and to rush towards his house when I see it on fire; it is a far wider, even though more vague feeling or instinct of human solidarity and sociability which moves me. So it is also with animals. It is not love, and not even sympathy (understood in its proper sense) which induces a herd of ruminants or of horses to form a ring in order to resist an attack of wolves; not love which induces wolves to form a pack for hunting; not love which induces kittens or lambs to play, or a dozen of species of young birds to spend their days together in the winter; not love which induces life-bearing ants to share their food with those of their comrades which are hungry. The feeling of love, sympathy and like impulses evidently play an immense part in the development of sociable customs and social instincts; but it is not love which induces us to work for others; it is not even sympathy in its wide sense; it is a feeling infinitely wider than love or personal sympathy — an instinct that has been slowly developed among animals and men in the course of an extremely long evolution, and which has taught animals and men alike the force they can borrow from the practice of mutual aid and support, and the joys they can find in social life.

The parental feelings, with the aid of foresight, have developed into a feeling of solidarity with the offspring for life; and when we see how much the sociable animals are helped in their struggle for life by their being sociable, how often they escape dangers, and get food, just because they mutually aid each other — we certainly must recognize that the sociable feeling has been strengthened by natural selection. It is a feeling which is so deeply enrooted in animal life, especially in the life of the mammalia, and it has developed so much under the influence of natural selection, that it has become one of the chief features of animal life, one of the chief factors of further evolution. In the animal world we have seen that the vast majority of species live in societies, and that they find in association the best arms for the struggle for life: understood, of course, in its wide Darwinian sense — not as a struggle for the sheer means of existence, but as a struggle against all natural conditions unfavourable to the species. The animal species, in which individual struggle has been reduced to its narrowest limits, and the practice of mutual aid has attained the greatest development, are invariably the most numerous, the most prosperous, and the most open to further progress. The mutual protection which is obtained in this case, the possibility of attaining old age and of accumulating experience, the higher intellectual development, and the further growth of sociable habits, secure the maintenance of the species, its extension, and its further progressive evolution. The unsociable species, on the contrary, are doomed to decay.

From: *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*

'Solidarity, Not Charity': A Visual History of Mutual Aid

ARIEL ABERG-RIGER



Tens of thousands of mutual aid networks and projects emerged around the world in 2020. They have long been a tool for marginalized groups.

► 2020 was a year of crisis. A year of isolation. A year of protest. And a year of mutual aid.

From meal deliveries to sewing squads, childcare collectives to legal aid, neighbors and strangers opened their wallets, offered their skills, volunteered their time, and joined together in solidarity to support one another.

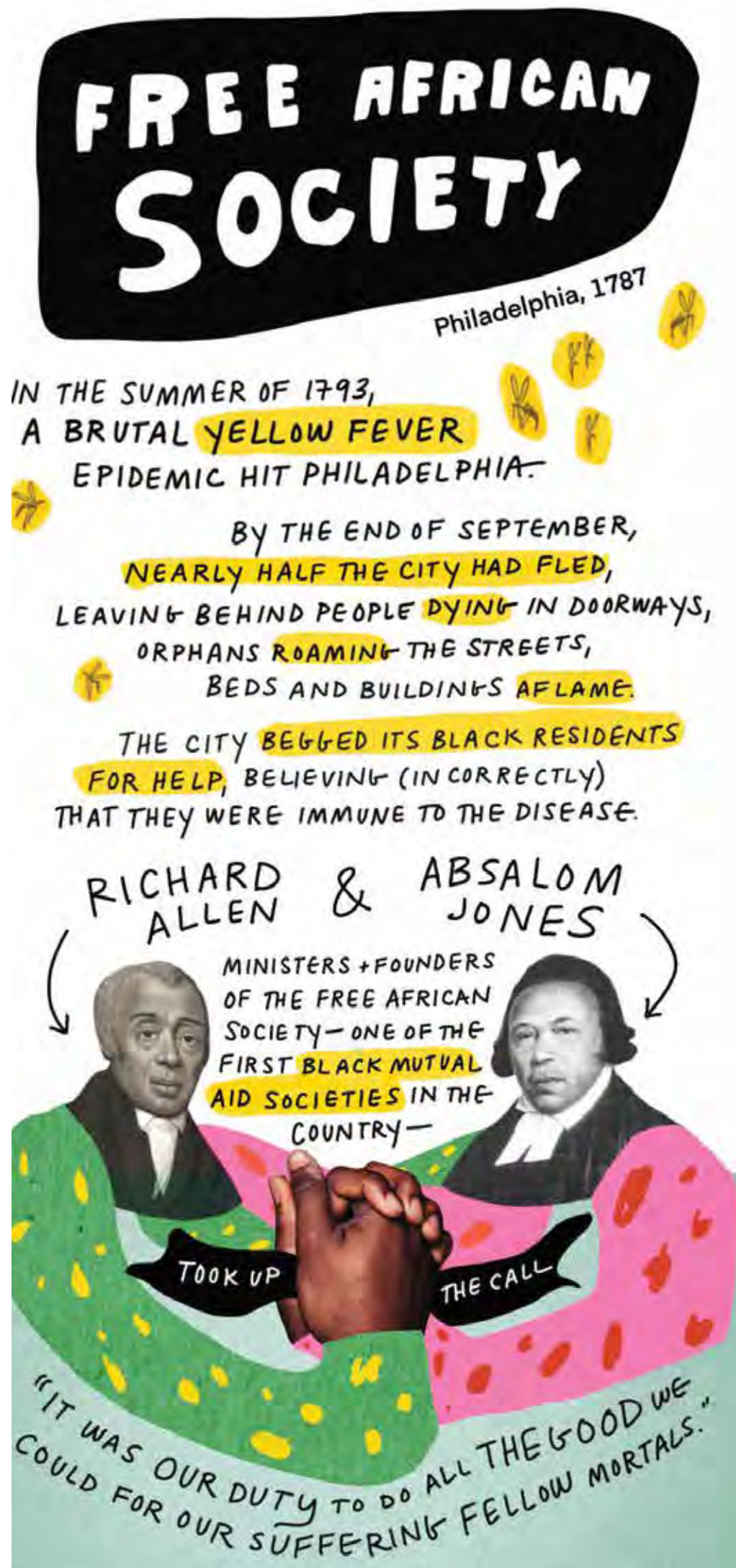
Tens of thousands of mutual aid networks and projects have emerged around the world since the Covid-19 pandemic began, according to Mariame Kaba, an educator, abolitionist and organizer. During the first week of the U.S. lockdown in March 2020, Kaba joined with Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez to create Mutual Aid 101, an online toolkit that educates and empowers people to build their own mutual aid networks throughout their buildings, blocks, neighborhoods, and cities. Emphasizing a focus on "solidarity, not charity," mutual aid is all about cooperation because, as the toolkit puts it, "we recognize that our well-being, health and dignity are all bound up in each other."

"Mutual aid projects are a form of political participation in which people take responsibility for caring for one another and changing political conditions," says Dean Spade, a trans activist, writer, and speaker. "Not through symbolic acts or putting pressure on representatives, but by actually building new social relations that are more survivable."

While many are engaging with mutual aid for the first time this year, there is a rich history and legacy of communities — especially those failed by our systems of power — coming together to help each other survive, and thrive. Here are nine examples from history.

Ariel Aberg-Riger is a visual storyteller who writes about everything from affordable housing to domestic violence for places like The Guardian, Teen Vogue, and CityLab. Her first book America Redux: Visual Stories From Our Dynamic History is out now!

Reprinted from Bloomberg.com



► **The Free African Society (FAS)**, founded in 1787, was a benevolent organization that held religious services and provided mutual aid for "free Africans and their descendants" in Philadelphia. The Society was founded by Richard Allen and Absalom Jones. It was the first Black religious institution in the city and led to the establishment of the first independent Black churches in the United States.

Founding members, all free Black men, included Samuel Baston, Joseph Johnson, Cato Freedman, Caesar Cranchell, James Potter and William White. Notable members included African-American abolitionists such as Cyrus Bustill, James Forten, and William Gray.

- Wikipedia

THE F.A.S. RALLIED ITS MEMBERS TO OFFER RELIEF TO THE SICK, SHELTER ORPHANS, AND TRANSPORT + BURY THE DEAD.

THE EFFORT COST MANY OF THEM THEIR LIVES AND ACTUALLY FURTHER ISOLATED THEM FROM PHILADELPHIA'S WHITE COMMUNITY (RATHER THAN THANK THEM, SOME ACCUSED THEM OF PROFITING OFF THE DISASTER).

BUT,

F.A.S. CARRIED ON, REFUTING THE SLANDER, AND CONTINUING THE MUTUAL AID WORK IT HAD DONE FOR YEARS, FEEDING, HOUSING, PROTECTING & CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER.

BLACK MUTUAL AID SOCIETIES SPREAD RAPIDLY IN THE EARLY 1800S. BY 1830, THERE WERE 100 MUTUAL AID SOCIETIES IN PHILADELPHIA, 30 IN BALTIMORE, AND OTHERS IN CITIES FROM BOSTON TO NEW ORLEANS.

► The Free African Society (FAS) developed as part of the rise in civic organizing following American independence in the Revolutionary War (1776-1778); it was the first black mutual aid society in Philadelphia.

MANY, LIKE F.A.S., WERE ABLE TO CARE FOR THEIR COMMUNITY BY CHARGING MEMBER MEMBERSHIP DUES THAT CREATED SOLIDARITY AND A COMMUNAL POT FOR ALL TO DRAW FROM. AS MORE BLACK PEOPLE SELF-EMANCIPATED AND CAME NORTH, MUTUAL AID NETWORKS EXPANDED TO MEET THEIR NEEDS LIKE —

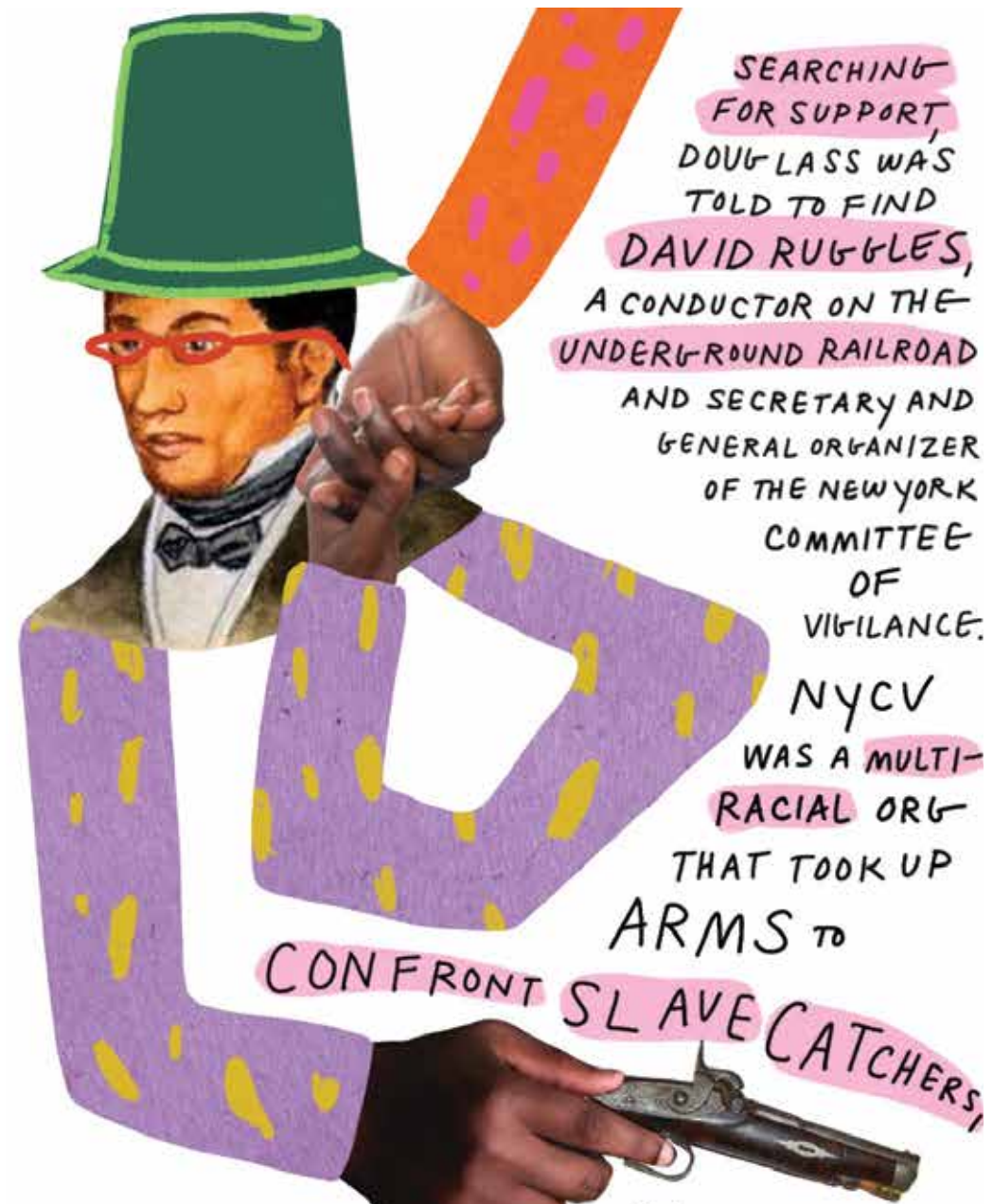
THE NEW YORK COMMITTEE OF VIGILANCE

New York City, 1835

WHEN FREDERICK DOUGLASS ESCAPED FROM ENSLAVEMENT IN 1830, HE FLED TO NYC. SELF-EMANCIPATION WAS DANGEROUS AND TERRIFYING — YOU HAD NO MONEY, NO HOME, AND WHITE KIDNAPPERS + POLICE WERE HUNTING YOU DOWN.

► During the antebellum era, New York City became an even more dangerous place for Blacks.

In New York, the common black citizenry sustained The New York Committee of Vigilance (NYCV). This group of poor laborers could be called upon to support the formal organization, but also acted informally, sometimes mobilizing to rescue blacks from authorities, often to the displeasure of black leadership. While the New York communities offered some sanctuary, a great element of danger existed.



SEARCHING FOR SUPPORT, DOUGLASS WAS TOLD TO FIND DAVID RUGGLES, A CONDUCTOR ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD AND SECRETARY AND GENERAL ORGANIZER OF THE NEW YORK COMMITTEE OF VIGILANCE.

NYCV WAS A MULTI-RACIAL ORG THAT TOOK UP ARMS TO

CONFRONT SLAVE CATCHERS,

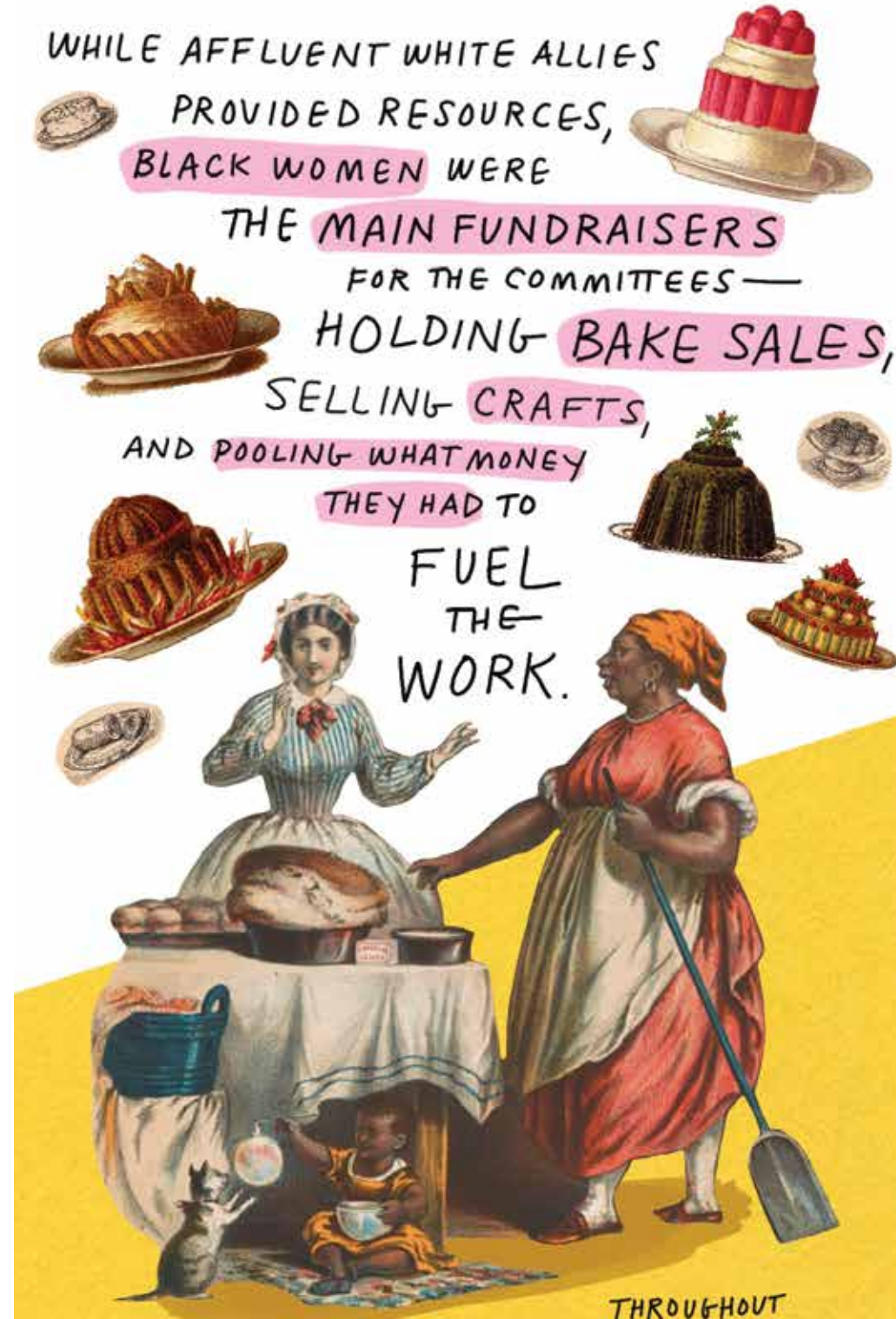
PASSIONATELY ADVOCATED FOR BLACK PEOPLE IN COURT, AND PROVIDED AN ARRAY OF RELIEF INCLUDING SHELTER, FOOD, COMMUNITY, ADVICE, TRANSPORTATION, AND ACTIVISM EDUCATION. RUGGLES CALLED IT:

"PRACTICAL ABOLITION"

BY THE 1840s, VIGILANCE COMMITTEES SPRUNG UP IN ALBANY, BOSTON, DETROIT,

PHILADELPHIA, ROCHESTER + CLEVELAND — EACH WORKING ON THE GROUND LOCALLY WHILE COMMUNICATING WITH ONE ANOTHER.

WHILE AFFLUENT WHITE ALLIES PROVIDED RESOURCES, BLACK WOMEN WERE THE MAIN FUNDRAISERS FOR THE COMMITTEES — HOLDING BAKE SALES, SELLING CRAFTS, AND POOLING WHAT MONEY THEY HAD TO FUEL THE WORK.



THROUGHOUT THE 19TH CENTURY, BLACK WOMEN WERE POWERFUL DRIVERS OF MUTUAL AID EFFORTS, ESTABLISHING DAY CARES, ORPHANAGES, ELDERCARE, HOSPITALS, CEMETERIES, NIGHT SCHOOLS, SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS, AND IN THE CASE OF THE COMBAHEE RIVER COLONY, THEIR OWN SELF-SUFFICIENT COOPERATIVES.

► The Combahee River Colony was located in a remote area where African Americans established their own settlements and remained relatively self-sufficient and semiautonomous: The Gullah/Geechee communities in South Carolina and Georgia Sea islands. The Combahee River Colony in South Carolina consisted of several hundred African American women during the Civil War who men had gone to join the Union Army. The occupied abandoned farmland where they grew crops and cared for one another.

The refused to work for Whites and were proud of their handicrafts and cotton crop, as well as their independence. The community became relatively well known as an example of Black women's independence and collective spirit.

- *Collective Courage: A History of African American Cooperative Economic Thought*

► The Raid on Combahee Ferry (also known as the Combahee River Raid) was a military operation during the American Civil War conducted on June 1 and June 2, 1863, by elements of the Union Army along the Combahee River in Beaufort and Colleton counties in the South Carolina Lowcountry.

Harriet Tubman, who had escaped from slavery in 1849 and guided many others to freedom, led an expedition of 150 African American soldiers of the 2nd South Carolina Infantry. The Union ships rescued and transported more than 750 former slaves freed five months earlier by the Emancipation Proclamation, many of whom joined the Union Army.

► David Ruggles, Secretary of the New York Committee of Vigilance organization, made it clear to readers of *The Liberator* that the time had come for the African American community to take their problems into their own hands. Ruggles wrote, "We must no longer depend on the interposition of Manumission or Anti-Slavery Societies, in the hope of peaceable and just protection; where such outrages are committed, peace and justice cannot dwell."

► One early effort to obtain pensions for ex-slaves was led by white newspaper editor, Walter R. Vaughan of Omaha, Nebraska. He modeled his plan off of pensions provided by the Federal government to former Union soldiers, and he persuaded his congressman, William James Connell (R-NE) to introduce the measure to the House of Representatives in 1890. A native of Selma, Alabama, Vaughan believed that pensions to former slaves would provide increased economic vitality and stability to the New South. In 1891 he published a pamphlet entitled "Freedmen's Pension Bill: A Plea for American Freedmen," and sold copies at a dollar a piece. A black man who worked as a distributor of Vaughan's pamphlet was Isaiah Dickerson of Rutherford County, Tennessee. A few years later, Dickerson and Callie House would launch their own pension and reparations movement by forming an organization led by and composed of African Americans. The 1900 Nashville City Directory lists the address of the National Ex-Slave Mutual Relief, Bounty and Pension Association as being located at 903 Church Street in Nashville.

The first annual convention of the National Ex-Slave Mutual Relief, Bounty and Pension Association was held November 28 through December 1, 1898 in Nashville, Tennessee at Gay Street Christian Church.


- Wikipedia

THEIR ACTIONS WERE
VISIONARY + VARIED,
 CREATIVE SOLUTIONS TO VIOLENT,
 OPPRESSIVE POWER STRUCTURES.
 THEY CARED FOR EACH OTHER'S
MATERIAL NEEDS
 WHILE THEY ALSO FOUGHT FOR JUSTICE
 LIKE IN THE CASE OF —

**THE EX-SLAVE
 MUTUAL RELIEF,
 BOUNTY + PENSION
 ASSOCIATION**
 Tennessee, 1896


BY THE MID-19TH
 CENTURY, MANY WHITE
 MUNICIPAL WORKERS BEGAN
 TO RECEIVE
PENSIONS
 FOR THEIR
 LABOR, AND
 BY THE LATE 19TH
 CENTURY THE IDEA
 OF GIVING PENSIONS
 TO UNION VETS TOOK
 HOLD AS WELL.

AS FOR THE
 NEARLY **FOUR**
 MILLION **BLACK**
 WORKERS



EMANCIPATED
 AFTER THE
 CIVIL WAR?
NO SUCH LUCK.
**CALLIE
 HOUSE,**
 ONE OF THOSE WORKERS,
 ORGANIZED AN
 ASSOCIATION
 WHOSE GOAL WAS TO
DEMAND PENSIONS
FOR THE FORMERLY
ENSLAVED, AS WELL
AS COMPENSATION
FOR YEARS OF UNPAID
LABOR. THE GROUP ALSO
PROVIDED RELIEF TO
MEMBERS IN NEED,
 INCLUDING MEDICAL + BURIAL
 SUPPORT. MEMBERS PAID AN INITIAL **25¢**
 PLUS **20¢** A MONTH (\$6-7 TODAY). THE
 FEES CREATED A **DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURE**
 WHERE EVERYONE COULD **CONTRIBUTE,**
 & **EVERYONE HAD A VOICE.**

BY 1890,
 15% OF BLACK
 MEN + 52% OF
 BLACK WOMEN
 IN NYC BELONGED
 TO A MUTUAL AID
 SOCIETY.
 -W.E.B. Du Bois



AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY,
 AS MORE AND MORE IMMIGRANTS CAME
 TO THE U.S., THEY ALSO TURNED TO EACH

► Callie House (1861-1928) was a leader of the National Ex-Slave Mutual Relief, Bounty and Pension Association, one of the first organizations to campaign for reparations for slavery in the United States.

House was born enslaved in Rutherford County, near Nashville, Tennessee. At the age of 22, she married William House. They had six children, five of which survived. After William died, House supported her family by being a washerwoman. At 36, she began organizing hundreds of thousands of people calling for US reparations, building a powerful movement for which she was unjustly imprisoned in 1916.

- Wikipedia

► Since its organization in the 1850s and formal establishment in 1882 in San Francisco's Chinatown, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) has received a diverse range of publicity from American media. Much of the attention often overlooked inherent cultural differences, which ultimately led to misunderstanding by much of the American population. This factor, together with increasing anti-Chinese sentiment, hastened the need for an empowered Chinese organization in the US. Thus, the CCBA was formed out of the need for the Chinese to have organized social, political, and economic structures

The CCBA was set up to help Chinese people relocate and travel to and from the US, including returning bodies of the deceased to China. With many families fragmented between China and across the US, the association also allowed for communal care of the sick or poor. When the association became more prominent and anti-Chinese sentiment increased, the organization also offered legal and physical protection. Physical abuse was not uncommon in Chinatown from racist Americans. Such incidents led to the rise of groups like the tong, which were noted to have protected Chinese from abuse by white miners.

Through the 1800s, a large portion of Chinese immigrants to California came for the promise of work in the gold mines, and their contribution was integral to the economic boom the state experienced as a result of the discovery of gold. When this industry declined, the Chinese found other opportunities, such as fishing, food service, farming, and railroad building. Many in the mid-to-late-19th century argued that the influx of Chinese immigrants decreased job availability for American citizens. However, the job competition theory is disputed due to the strong language barrier that forced many Chinese to create their own jobs.

- Wikipedia

OTHER TO SEEK PROTECTION FROM
RACIST SYSTEMS
 OF POWER THAT DID NOT PROTECT
 THEIR INTERESTS OR THEIR LIVES.



THE PRACTICE OF **STICKING TOGETHER** FOR PROTECTION,

COMMUNITY AND POOLED POWER
 WAS COMMON ACROSS IMMIGRANT GROUPS.



► There were different types of landsmanshaftn, including Jewish burial societies known as chevra kadisha, societies associated with a particular synagogue or social movement, and "ladies auxiliary" societies for women.

Members paid dues on a regular basis, and if they lost their jobs, became too sick to work, or died, the society paid the member or their family a benefit to keep them afloat during that time. When the funds were not needed to support members, landsmanshaftn frequently invested the money in funds that supported the Jewish community in other ways, such as Israel Bonds. Most landsmanshaftn were based in New York City, where the majority of Jews settled and conditions were conducive to sustaining these types of organizations, though they sometimes relocated as the membership migrated to the suburbs.

- Wikipedia

► **Sociedades Mutualistas** for Latin Americans flourished in the Southwestern United States at the turn of the 20th century, serving as vehicles for community self-sufficiency and social support. Some societies still survive today, stressing their original values of Unity, Work, Protection, Education, Faith, and Brotherhood. These groups borrowed concepts from medieval guilds, 1900s friendly societies, rural cooperatives, and charitable lay brotherhoods of the Catholic Church.

Like their African American counterparts, duties of these societies historically included caring for the sick, making funeral arrangements, assisting widows and orphaned children, and settling disputes. During the colonial period, they formed local ditch associations to take charge of developing and maintaining irrigation waters essential to agricultural villages. Work tasks were performed collectively by all members (a practice which continued into the modern era).

In the 19th and 20th century, sociedades mutualistas filled a gap left by commercial life insurance companies which were disinterested in selling to minorities due to stereotypes and desire to maximize profits. (Companies refused to sell policies to Mexican Americans, for example, because it was believed that they all had tuberculosis).

The sociedades also played a prominent role in labor and civil rights issues. In its first decade, one of the most successful of these organizations—The Alianza Hispano-Americana—successfully negotiated concessions for higher wages on behalf of 1,200 to 1,500 striking mine workers in Arizona. By the early 1920s, Alianza chapters provided legal assistance through a defense fund to victims of injustice based on their national origin or economic status. Alianza fought to change legal procedures on behalf of the poor, and offered its lawyers whenever possible to any Mexican American without proper representation.

- Go Humanity

IN THE SOUTHWEST, SOCIEDADES MUTUALISTAS OFFERED MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS AND NATIVE TEJANOS EVERYTHING FROM LOANS TO LEGAL AID,

LIBRARIES TO LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES. THEY WERE SAFE SPACES FOR COMMUNITY EVENTS, AND SOME WERE TRADE UNIONS WHICH STAGED STRIKES, FOUGHT FOR INTEGRATED SCHOOLS, AND ADVISED FARM WORKERS OF THEIR RIGHTS.

WHILE MANY ORGANIZED MUTUAL AID GROUPS SHRANK AFTER THE GREAT DEPRESSION, THE 1960S + 70S SAW A RESURGENCE OF CREATIVE, COMMUNAL RESISTANCE AS A RESPONSE TO STRUCTURAL RACISM.

Oakland, 1969

THE BLACK PANTHERS' FREE BREAKFAST FOR CHILDREN PROGRAM

ONE OF THE BEST KNOWN MUTUAL AID EFFORTS IN RECENT HISTORY. THE FREE BREAKFAST PROGRAM, WAS ONE OF 60 SOCIAL "SURVIVAL" PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED BY THE BLACK PANTHERS (OTHERS INCLUDED THE FREE AMBULANCE PROGRAM, FREE MEDICAL CLINICS, AND RIDES FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE DOING ERRANDS).

DRAWING ON RESEARCH THAT SHOWED WHAT AN ESSENTIAL MEAL BREAKFAST IS FOR HEALTH + LEARNING, THE PANTHERS BEGAN COOKING + SERVING FREE BREAKFASTS TO LOCAL KIDS IN OAKLAND.

Photo: It's About Time

► Founded in 1966 in Oakland, California, the **Black Panther Party for Self Defense** was the era's most influential militant black power organization.

Its members confronted politicians, challenged the police, and protected black citizens from brutality. The party's community service programs - called "survival programs" - provided food, clothing, and transportation. Rather than integrating American society, members wanted to change it fundamentally. For them, black power was a global revolution.

_ National Museum of African American History and Culture

► The Panthers started the **Free Breakfast Program** because hunger and poverty made it difficult for many poor black children to learn in school. In 1968, most poor children went to school hungry and stayed hungry. The national School Lunch Program provided reduced-price, but not free lunches for poor children, and the national School Breakfast Program was limited to a few rural schools. To address this need, the Panthers initiated the Free Breakfast Program at St. Augustine's Church in Oakland in January 1969.

The Panthers' **Free Breakfast Program** focused national attention on the urgent need to give poor children nutritious meals so they could be successful in school. In 1973, this attention helped lead to Congress' dramatic increase in funding of the national School Lunch Program so poor children could get free lunches. The Panther's Free Breakfast Program spotlighted the limited scope of the national School Breakfast Program and helped pressure Congress to authorize expansion of the program to all public schools in 1975.

► The Black Panther Party first publicized its original "What We Want Now!" Ten-Point program on May 15, 1967, following the Sacramento action, in the second issue of The Black Panther newspaper.

We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.

We want full employment for our people.

We want an end to the robbery by the Capitalists of our Black Community.

We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.

We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in present-day society.

We want all Black men to be exempt from military service.

We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of Black people.

We want freedom for all Black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.

We want all Black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their Black Communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.

We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.

THEY SOLICITED DONATIONS (OF BOTH FOOD + MONEY) FROM NEIGHBORS + LOCAL BUSINESSES, AND QUICKLY EXPANDED TO 45 CITIES AROUND THE COUNTRY FEEDING 50,000 KIDS.

TEACHERS IMMEDIATELY SAW RESULTS, SAYING CHILDREN WERE HAPPIER, MORE ALERT, AND LEARNING MUCH BETTER THAN THEY HAD BEEN BEFORE. THE F.B.I. SAW A "THREAT" AND SHUT DOWN THE PROGRAM BY RAIDING CAFETERIAS WHILE KIDS ATE, AND IN ONE CASE URINATING ON FOOD TO DESTROY IT. SHORTLY AFTER THE PROGRAM ENDED, THE USDA STARTED A FEDERAL FREE BREAKFAST PROGRAM.

THE YOUNG LORDS GARBAGE OFFENSIVE

New York City, 1969

IN EAST HARLEM, A GROUP OF YOUNG PUERTO RICANS CALLED THE YOUNG LORDS (AGED 15-22) WERE SICK OF THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD OVERFLOWING WITH TRASH BECAUSE THE SANITATION DEPARTMENT NEGLECTED THEM.

"MOTIVATED BY LOVE FOR OUR PEOPLE AND OUTRAGE AGAINST AN UNJUST SYSTEM, WE BELIEVED THAT THE COMMUNITY'S SURVIVAL AND WELL-BEING DEPENDED ON COLLECTIVE ACTION."

SO, THEY STARTED GETTING TOGETHER EVERY SUNDAY TO CLEAN IT UP.

A FEW SUNDAYS IN, NEIGHBORS CAME OUT TO HELP.

► The Young Lords started in 1960 in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood as a Puerto Rican turf gang. On Grito de Lares, September 23, 1968, Jose Cha Cha Jimenez reorganized them and formed the Young Lords as a national political and civil rights movement. The new community-wide movement then spread to nearly 30 cities, including three branches in New York, which at the time served as the entry point for 90% of Puerto Ricans. In addition, the Young Lords began operating free programs for the community. In addition to their support for Puerto Ricans' independence, all Latino nations, and oppressed nations of the world, the Young Lords also supported neighborhood empowerment. The radical movement of the Young Lords modeled themselves after the Black Panther Party, calling for a vanguard of revolutionary minority parties coming together that felt oppressed by a system that wasn't designed to be of assistance to minorities.

The 1968 Democratic Convention protests in Grant Park and the adjacent Lincoln Park Neighborhood, resulted in the Young Lords, under the leadership of founder José Cha Cha Jiménez, to join with others to form a broader civil and human rights movement. [11] Puerto Rican self-determination and the displacement of Puerto Ricans and poor residents became the primary issues of organizing. The Young Lords organization also began to train students and youth to take on the leadership to organize the Latino community on a national level.

On July 27, 1969, the chapter office in New York City mounted a "Garbage Offensive" to commemorate the 1968 Sanitation Strike and to protest the substandard garbage collection service in East Harlem. The event also promoted the opening of the Young Lords' New York City office. The offensives targeted local city services and were aligned with the National Headquarters mission to develop neighborhood empowerment. In Chicago, the Young Lords occupied local institutions in the Lincoln Park neighborhood to support low-income housing for working families.

► The National Headquarters Young Lords' mission called for self determination for Puerto Rico, all Latino nations, all oppressed nations of the world, and for barrio empowerment. The Young Lords also created a 10-point program modeled after the Black Panthers 10 point program. The New York office created a 13-point program after they split from Chicago National Headquarters as follows:

We want self-determination for Puerto Ricans—Liberation on the island and inside the United States.

We want self-determination for all Latinos.

We want liberation for all third world people.

We are revolutionary nationalists and oppose racism.

We want community control of our institutions and land.

We want true education of our creole culture. We oppose capitalists and alliances with traitors.

We oppose the amerikkkan military.

We want freedom for all political prisoners.

We want equality for women. Machismo must be revolutionary ... not oppressive.

We fight anti-Communism with international unity.

We believe armed self-defense and armed struggle are the only means to liberation.

We want a socialist society.

WHEN THEY DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH BROOMS,
THE YOUNG LORDS ASKED THE CITY TO
PROVIDE THEM. WHEN THEY WOULDN'T, THEY
SWEPT ALL OF THE GARBAGE INTO THE
MIDDLE OF THIRD AVENUE AND
SET IT ON FIRE.

TRAFFIC WAS BLOCKED,
THE MEDIA COVERED IT,
AND THE CITY WAS FORCED
TO CLEAN IT UP.

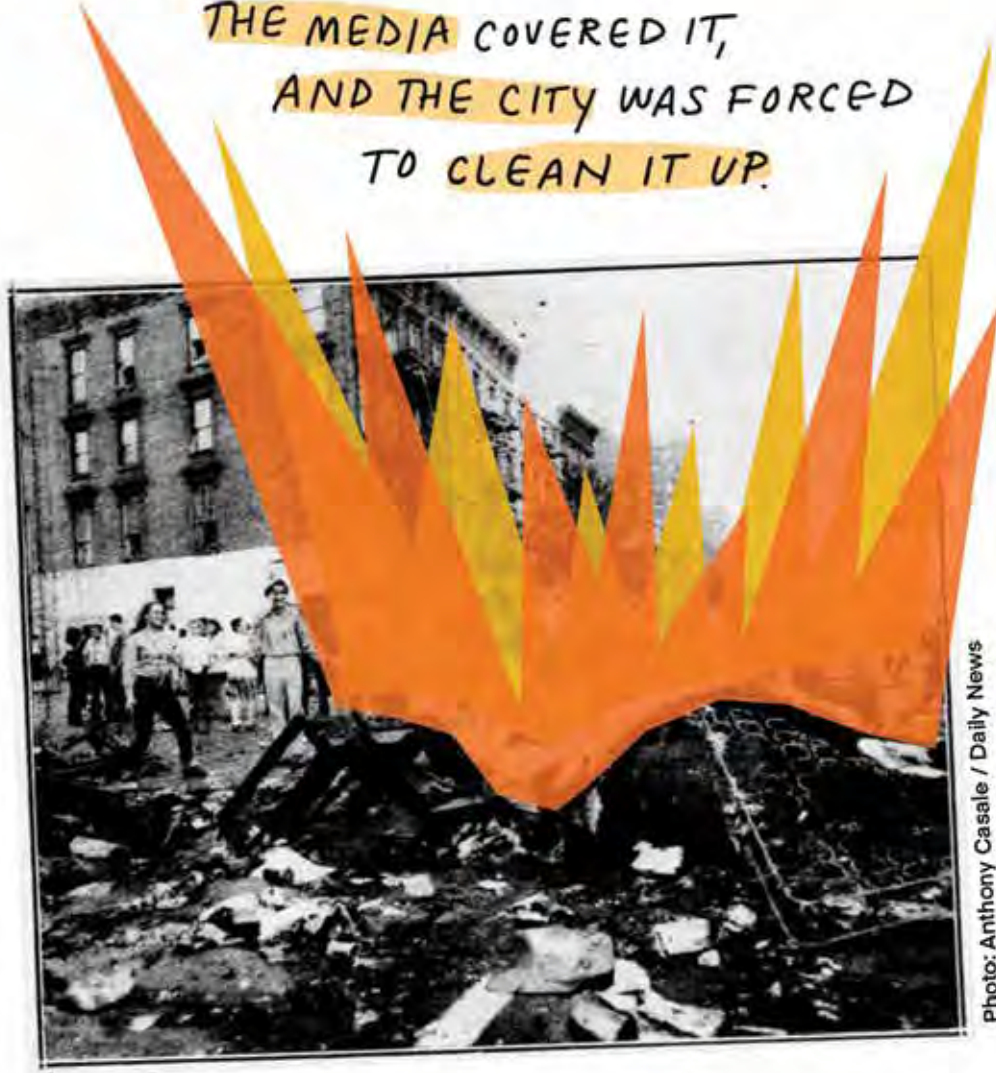


Photo: Anthony Casale / Daily News

OTHER YOUNG LORDS' MUTUAL AID
INITIATIVES INCLUDED OCCUPYING
SEVERAL CHURCHES TO RUN FREE
BREAKFAST + DAYCARE PROGRAMS, AND
COMMANDERING A CITY-OWNED TB-
TESTING X-RAY TRUCK THAT HAD
BYPASSED THE NEIGHBORHOOD IN ORDER TO
PROVIDE FREE HEALTHCARE SCREENINGS
FOR THE COMMUNITY.

FIFTEEN YEARS LATER,
AS THE AIDS EPIDEMIC SWEEPED
THE COUNTRY + THE GAY COMMUNITY
WAS LEFT SICK, ABANDONED BY
THE GOVERNMENT, AND REVILED BY
MAINSTREAM AMERICA, MUTUAL
AID NETWORKS AGAIN AROSE
TO PROVIDE CARE.



AS MORE AND MORE GAY MEN BEGAN
DYING OF AIDS, TIM BURAK, A VOLUNTEER
AT SEATTLE GAY CLINIC PROPOSED A
"BUDDY NETWORK" WHERE
VOLUNTEERS COULD



► Chicken Soup Brigade was born out of the Seattle Gay Clinic in 1983 as a way to help people living with any disabling illness to get to doctor's appointments, to provide companionship, and to deliver groceries to them. By 1984, the focus shifted to serving people with AIDS.

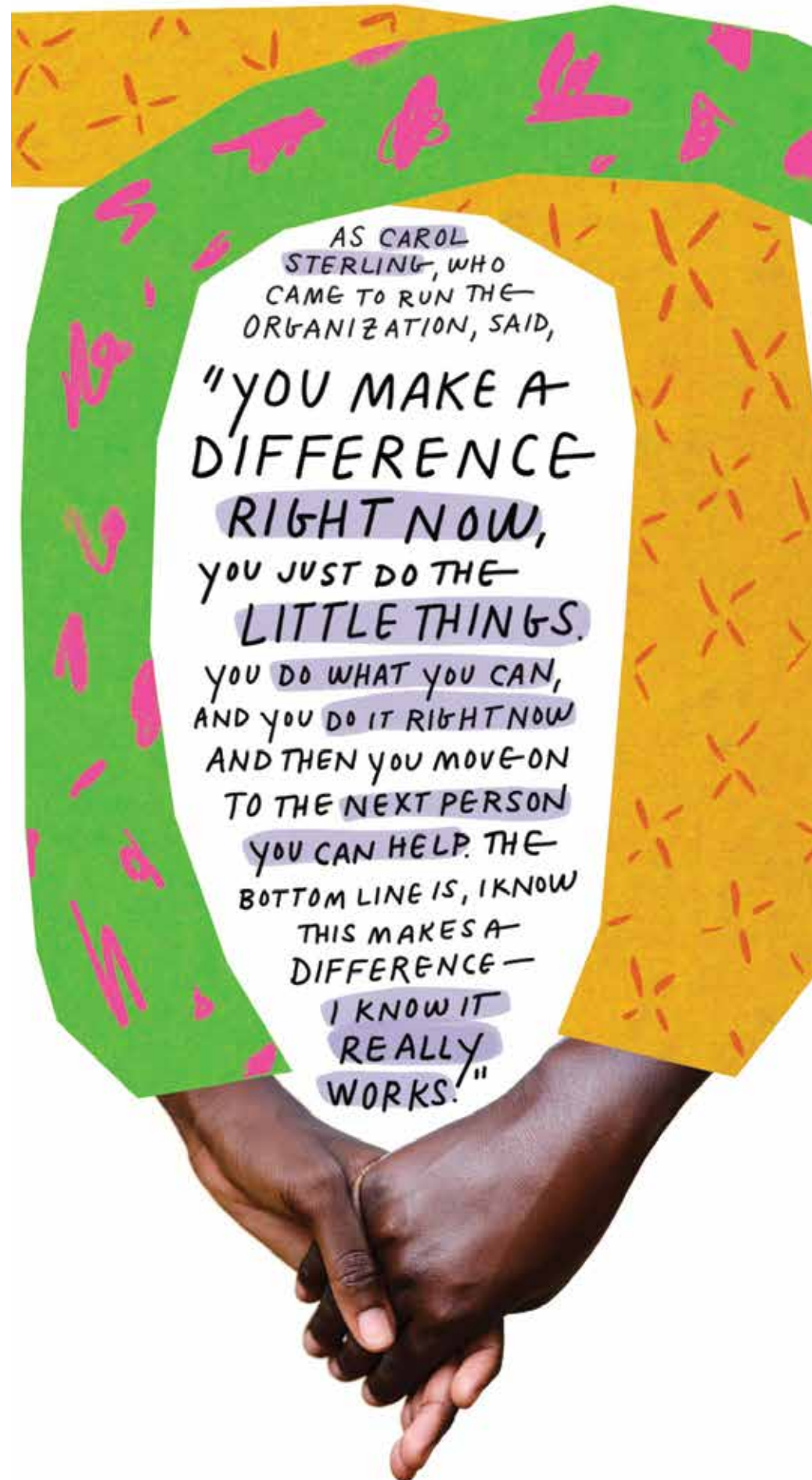
As the volunteer effort grew, the focus shifted to food. In 1987, CSB hired its first paid staff member, Carol Sterling, who has been credited with creating a period of immense growth. She hired new staff and grew the budget and volunteer base. Sterling reached the position of executive director in 1990 but stepped down to focus on fund development. A co-executive director model was then adopted.

By 1991, CSB had approximately 400 volunteers — most providing four hours a week. CSB then opened a thrift store at 207 Harvard Ave. In 1994, it hired a dietician. In 1996, it expanded its services to include anyone who was HIV-positive. Its client base expanded from 187 (or 350, depending on which historical document you read) in 1990 to over 900 by 1997.

In June 2000, Chicken Soup Brigade and the Northwest AIDS Foundation announced their intention to merge to form the Lifelong AIDS Alliance in 2001. Today, the organization is named, simply, Lifelong, to better fit its changing client base and shifting mission. -SGN

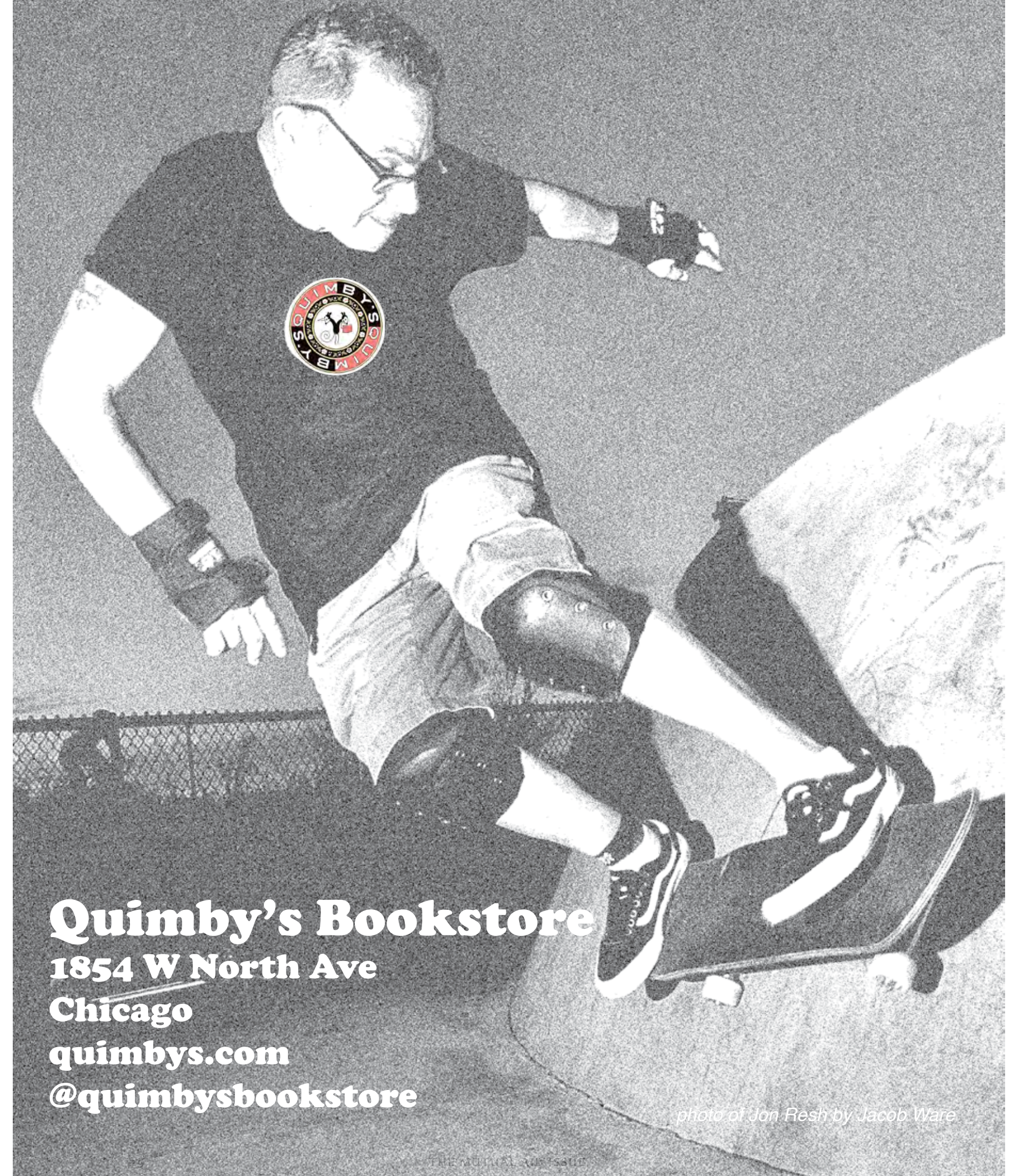
► Dean Spade's seminal work, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During this Crisis (And the Next)*, defines mutual aid as "survival work," done by ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances where government policies inadequately address crisis situations and even exacerbate structural inequities. When community care work is done in conjunction with ongoing social justice movements, this in Spade's mind is mutual aid.¹ Ride shares, free food and other survival items, community fundraising, prison letter-writing campaigns, and more can all fall under the umbrella of mutual aid. But more than this, mutual aid is about mobilizing communities to address a shared injustice and working together to collectively find solutions that don't rely on any one person, corporation, or government entity.

THE NETWORK EVOLVED INTO THE
CHICKEN SOUP BRIGADE,
AN ALL-VOLUNTEER CREW
SUPPORTING OVER 450 MEN.



AS CAROL
STERLING, WHO
CAME TO RUN THE
ORGANIZATION, SAID,
"YOU MAKE A
DIFFERENCE
RIGHT NOW,
YOU JUST DO THE
LITTLE THINGS.
YOU DO WHAT YOU CAN,
AND YOU DO IT **RIGHT NOW**
AND THEN YOU MOVE ON
TO THE NEXT PERSON
YOU CAN HELP. THE
BOTTOM LINE IS, I KNOW
THIS MAKES A
DIFFERENCE—
**I KNOW IT
REALLY
WORKS."**

**You too would also successfully land a wallride
if you were in a Quimby's t-shirt.**



Quimby's Bookstore
1854 W North Ave
Chicago
quimbys.com
@quimbysbookstore

photo of Jon Resh by Jacob Ware

OCTOBER 1966 BLACK PANTHER PARTY PLATFORM AND PROGRAM

WHAT WE WANT

1. WE WANT FREEDOM. WE WANT POWER TO DETERMINE THE DESTINY OF OUR BLACK COMMUNITY.
2. WE WANT FULL EMPLOYMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE.
3. WE WANT AN END TO THE ROBBERY BY THE WHITE MAN OF OUR BLACK COMMUNITY.
4. WE WANT DECENT HOUSING, FIT FOR SHELTER OF HUMAN BEINGS.
5. WE WANT EDUCATION FOR OUR PEOPLE THAT EXPOSES THE TRUE NATURE OF THIS DECADENT AMERICAN SOCIETY. WE WANT EDUCATION THAT TEACHES US OUR TRUE HISTORY AND OUR ROLE IN THE PRESENT DAY SOCIETY.
6. WE WANT ALL BLACK MENTTO BE EXEMPT FROM MILITARY SERVICE.
7. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO POLICE BRUTALITY AND MURDER OF BLACK PEOPLE.
8. WE WANT FREEDOM FOR ALL BLACK MEN HELD IN FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY AND CITY PRISONS AND JAILS.
9. WE WANT ALL BLACK PEOPLE WHEN BROUGHT TO TRIAL TO BE TRIED IN COURT BY A JURY OF THEIR PEER GROUP OR PEOPLE FROM THEIR BLACK COMMUNITIES, AS DEFINED BY THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.
10. WE WANT LAND, BREAD, HOUSING, EDUCATION, CLOTHING, JUSTICE AND PEACE, AND AS OUR MAJOR POLITICAL OBJECTIVE, A UNITED NATIONS-SUPERVISED PLEBISCITE TO BE HELD THROUGHOUT THE BLACK COLONY IN WHICH ONLY BLACK COLONIAL SUBJECTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE, FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING THE WILL OF BLACK PEOPLE AS TO THEIR NATIONAL DESTINY.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

WE BELIEVE THAT BLACK PEOPLE WILL NOT BE FREE UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO DETERMINE OUR DESTINY.

WE BELIEVE THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS RESPONSIBLE AND OBLIGATED TO GIVE EVERY MAN EMPLOYMENT OR A GUARANTEED INCOME. WE BELIEVE THAT IF THE WHITE AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN WILL NOT GIVE FULL EMPLOYMENT, THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION SHOULD BE TAKEN FROM THE BUSINESSMEN AND PLACED IN THE COMMUNITY SO THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE COMMUNITY CAN ORGANIZE AND EMPLOY ALL OF ITS PEOPLE AND GIVE A HIGH STANDARD OF LIVING.

WE BELIEVE THAT THIS RACIST GOVERNMENT HAS ROBBED US AND NOW WE ARE DEMANDING THE OVERDUE DEBT OF FORTY ACRES AND TWO MULES. FORTY ACRES AND TWO MULES WAS PROMISED 100 YEARS AGO AS RESTITUTION FOR SLAVE LABOR AND MASS MURDER OF BLACK PEOPLE. WE WILL ACCEPT THE PAYMENT IN CURRENCY WHICH WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO OUR MANY COMMUNITIES. THE GERMANS ARE NOW AIDING THE JEWS IN ISRAEL FOR THE GENOCIDE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE. THE GERMANS MURDERED 6,000,000 JEWS. THE AMERICAN RACIST HAS TAKEN PART IN THE SLAUGHTER OF OVER 50,000,000 BLACK PEOPLE; THEREFORE, WE FEEL THAT THIS IS A MODEST DEMAND THAT WE MAKE.

WE BELIEVE THAT IF THE WHITE LANDLORDS WILL NOT GIVE DECENT HOUSING TO OUR BLACK COMMUNITY, THE HOUSING AND THE LAND SHOULD BE MADE INTO COOPERATIVES SO THAT OUR COMMUNITY, WITH GOVERNMENT AID, CAN BUILD AND MAKE DECENT HOUSING FOR ITS PEOPLE.

WE BELIEVE IN AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM THAT WILL GIVE TO OUR PEOPLE A KNOWLEDGE OF SELF. IF A MAN DOES NOT HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF HIMSELF AND HIS POSITION IN SOCIETY AND THE WORLD, THEN HE HAS LITTLE CHANCE TO RELATE TO ANYTHING ELSE.

WE BELIEVE THAT BLACK PEOPLE SHOULD NOT BE FORCED TO FIGHT IN THE MILITARY SERVICE TO DEFEND A RACIST GOVERNMENT THAT DOES NOT PROTECT US. WE WILL NOT FIGHT AND KILL OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR IN THE WORLD WHO, LIKE BLACK PEOPLE, ARE BEING VICTIMIZED BY THE WHITE RACIST GOVERNMENT OF AMERICA. WE WILL PROTECT OURSELVES FROM THE FORCE AND VIOLENCE OF THE RACIST POLICE AND THE RACIST MILITARY, BY WHATEVER MEANS NECESSARY.

WE BELIEVE WE CAN END POLICE BRUTALITY IN OUR BLACK COMMUNITY BY ORGANIZING BLACK SELF-DEFENSE GROUPS THAT ARE DEDICATED TO DEFENDING OUR BLACK COMMUNITY FROM RACIST POLICE OPPRESSION AND BRUTALITY. THE SECOND AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES GIVES US A RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE THAT ALL BLACK PEOPLE SHOULD ARM THEMSELVES FOR SELF DEFENSE.

WE BELIEVE THAT ALL BLACK PEOPLE SHOULD BE RELEASED FROM THE MANY JAILS AND PRISONS BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT RECEIVED A FAIR AND IMPARTIAL TRIAL.

WE BELIEVE THAT THE COURTS SHOULD FOLLOW THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION SO THAT BLACK PEOPLE WILL RECEIVE FAIR TRIALS. THE 14TH AMENDMENT OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION GIVES A MAN A RIGHT TO BE TRIED BY HIS PEER GROUP. A PEER IS A PERSON FROM A SIMILAR ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, RELIGIOUS, GEOGRAPHICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, HISTORICAL AND RACIAL BACKGROUND. TO DO THIS THE COURT WILL BE FORCED TO SELECT A JURY FROM THE BLACK COMMUNITY FROM WHICH THE BLACK DEFENDANT CAME. WE HAVE BEEN, AND ARE BEING TRIED BY ALL-WHITE JURIES THAT HAVE NO UNDERSTANDING OF THE "AVERAGE REASONING MAN" OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY.

WHEN IN THE COURSE OF HUMAN EVENTS, IT BECOMES NECESSARY FOR ONE PEOPLE TO DISSOLVE THE POLITICAL BONDS WHICH HAVE CONNECTED THEM WITH ANOTHER, AND TO ASSUME AMONG THE POWERS OF THE EARTH, THE SEPARATE AND EQUAL STATION TO WHICH THE LAWS OF NATURE AND NATURE'S GOD ENTITLE THEM, A DECENT RESPECT TO THE OPINIONS OF MANKIND REQUIRES THAT THEY SHOULD DECLARE THE CAUSES WHICH IMPEL THEM TO SEPARATION. WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT, THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL, THAT THEY ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN INALIENABLE RIGHTS, THAT AMONG THESE ARE LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS, THAT TO SECURE THESE RIGHTS, GOVERNMENTS ARE INSTITUTED AMONG MEN, DERIVING THEIR JUST POWERS FROM THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED, THAT WHENEVER ANY FORM OF GOVERNMENT BECOMES DESTRUCTIVE OF THESE ENDS, IT IS THE RIGHT OF PEOPLE TO ALTER OR TO ABOLISH IT, AND TO INSTITUTE NEW GOVERNMENT, LAYING ITS FOUNDATION ON SUCH PRINCIPLES AND ORGANIZING ITS POWERS IN SUCH FORM AS TO THEM SHALL SEEM MOST LIKELY TO EFFECT THEIR SAFETY AND HAPPINESS.

PRUDENCE, INDEED, WILL DICTATE THAT GOVERNMENTS LONG ESTABLISHED SHOULD NOT BE CHANGED FOR LIGHT AND TRANSIENT CAUSES; AND ACCORDINGLY ALL EXPERIENCE HATH SHEWN, THAT MANKIND ARE MORE DISPOSED TO SUFFER, WHILE EVILS ARE SUFFERABLE, THAN TO RIGHT THEMSELVES BY ABOLISHING THE FORMS TO WHICH THEY ARE ACCUSTOMED. BUT WHEN A LONG TRAIN OF ABUSES AND USURPATION, PURSUING INVARIABLY THE SAME OBJECT, EVINCES A DESIGN TO REDUCE THEM UNDER ABSOLUTE DESPOTISM, IT IS THEIR RIGHT, IT IS THEIR DUTY, TO THROW OFF SUCH A GOVERNMENT, AND TO PROVIDE NEW GUARDS FOR THEIR FUTURE SECURITY.



The Black Panther May 4, 1968

Palante May 22, 1970.

13 POINT PROGRAM AND PLATFORM YOUNG LORDS ORGANIZATION OCTOBER 1969

THE YOUNG LORDS ORGANIZATION IS A REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL PARTY FIGHTING FOR THE LIBERATION OF ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE.

1. WE WANT SELF-DETERMINATION FOR PUERTO RICANS-- LIBERATION ON THE ISLAND AND INSIDE THE UNITED STATES

For 300 years, first Spain and then the United States have colonized our country. Billions of dollars in profits leave our country for the United States every year. In every way we are slaves of the gringo. We want liberation and the power in the hands of the people, not Puerto Rican exploiters. **QUE VIVA PUERTO RICO LIBRE!**

2. WE WANT SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL LATINOS

Our Latin Brothers and Sisters, inside and outside the United States, are oppressed by American business. The Chicano people built the Southwest, and we support their right to control their lives and their land. The people of Santo Domingo continue to fight against gringo domination and its puppet generals. The armed liberation struggles in Latin America are part of the same war of Latinos against imperialism. **QUE VIVA LA RAZA!**

3. WE WANT LIBERATION OF ALL THIRD WORLD PEOPLE

Just as Latinos first slaved under Spain and then the Yankees, Black people, Indians, and Asians slaved to build the wealth of this country. For 400 years they have fought for freedom and dignity against racist Babylon (decadent empire). Third World people have led the fight for freedom. All the colored and oppressed peoples of the world are one nation under oppression. **NO PUERTO RICAN IS FREE UNTIL ALL PEOPLE ARE FREE!**

4. WE ARE REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISTS AND OPPOSE RACISM

The Latin, Black, Indian and Asian people inside the U.S. are colonies fighting for liberation. We know that Washington, Wall Street, and City Hall will try to make our nationalism into racism; but Puerto Ricans are of all colors and we resist racism. Millions of poor white people are rising up to demand freedom and we support them. These are the ones in the U.S. that are stepped on by the rulers and the government. We each organize our people, but our fights are the same against oppression and we will defeat it together. **POWER TO ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE!**

5. WE WANT COMMUNITY CONTROL OF OUR INSTITUTIONS AND LAND

We want control of our communities by our people and programs to guarantee that all institutions serve the needs of our people. People's control of police, health services, churches, schools, housing, transportation and welfare are needed. We want an end to attacks on our land by urban removal, highway destruction, universities and corporations. **LAND BELONGS TO ALL THE PEOPLE!**

6. WE WANT A TRUE EDUCATION OF OUR CREOLE CULTURE AND SPANISH LANGUAGE

We must learn our history of fighting against cultural, as well as economic genocide by the yanqui. Revolutionary culture, culture of our people, is the only true teaching. **LONG LIVE BORICUA! LONG LIVE EL JIBARO!**



7. WE OPPOSE CAPITALISTS AND ALLIANCES WITH TRAITORS

Puerto Rican rulers, or puppets of the oppressor, do not help our people. They are paid by the system to lead our people down blind alleys, just like the thousands of poverty pumps who keep our communities peaceful for business, or the street workers who keep gangs divided and blowing each other away. We want a society where the people socially control their labor. **VENCEREMOS!**

8. WE OPPOSE THE AMERIKKAN MILITARY

We demand immediate withdrawal of US military forces and bases from Puerto Rico, Vietnam, and all oppressed communities inside and outside the US. No Puerto Rican should serve in the U.S. army against his Brothers and Sisters, for the only true army of oppressed people is the people's army to fight all rulers. **U.S. OUT OF VIETNAM, FREE PUERTO RICO!**

9. WE WANT FREEDOM FOR ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS

We want all Puerto Ricans freed because they have been tried by the racist courts of the colonizers, and not by their own people and peers. We want all freedom fighters released from jail. **FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS!**

10. WE WANT EQUALITY FOR WOMEN. MACHISMO MUST BE REVOLUTIONARY...NOT OPPRESSIVE

Under capitalism, our people have been oppressed by both the society and our own men. The doctrine of machismo has been used by our men to take out their frustrations against their wives, sisters, mothers, and children. Our men must support their women in their fight for economic and social equality, and must recognize that our women are equals in every way within the revolutionary ranks. **FORWARD, SISTERS, IN THE STRUGGLE!**

11. WE FIGHT ANTI-COMMUNISM WITH INTERNATIONAL UNITY

Anyone who resists injustice is called a communist by "the man" and condemned. Our people are brainwashed by television, radio, newspapers, schools, and books to oppose people in other countries fighting for their freedom. No longer will our people believe attacks and slanders, because they have learned who the real enemy is and who their real friends are. We will defend our Brothers and Sisters around the world who fight for justice against the rich rulers of this country. **VIVA CHE!**

12. WE BELIEVE ARMED SELF-DEFENSE AND ARMED STRUGGLE ARE THE ONLY MEANS TO LIBERATION

We are opposed to violence--the violence of hungry children, illiterate adults, diseased old people, and the violence of poverty and profit. We have asked, petitioned, gone to courts, demonstrated peacefully, and voted for politicians full of empty promises. But we still ain't free. The time has come to defend the lives of our people against repression and for revolutionary war against the businessman, politician, and police. When a government oppresses our people, we have the right to abolish it and create a new one. **BORICUA IS AWAKE! ALL PIGS BEWARE!**

13. WE WANT A SOCIALIST SOCIETY

We want liberation, clothing, free food, education, health care, transportation, utilities, and employment for all. We want a society where the needs of our people come first, and where we give solidarity and aid to the peoples of the world, not oppression and racism. **HASTA LA VICTORIA SIEMPRE!**

Grocery Run Club

Interview with Lucy Angel Camarena & Jorge Saldarriaga

BY STEPHANIE MANRIQUEZ

Lumpen Magazine interviewed Lucy Angel Camarena and Jorge Saldarriaga about the impact of Grocery Run Club within the Little Village community, how a service program to run groceries for people that started during the pandemic has flourished to an educative and wellness initiative. Grocery Run Club affirms healthy ways of living through their community garden, run club, workout classes, and more.

► **Could you describe what Grocery Run Club is and how it was founded?**

Grocery Run Club is a 501(c)3 non-profit that focuses on providing fresh food and everyday necessities to underserved communities throughout Chicago. My co-founder Jorge Saldarriaga and I started Grocery Run Club in June of 2020 as our way of helping to bring needed supplies to communities that were in need during the pandemic, however, we know this issue of equity is something that has existed long before the pandemic and continues to post pandemic.

How many people have benefited from this program?

At this point coming to our third year in operation we've been able to service tens of thousands Chicago residents.

This program was a direct response to the pandemic, how has it changed since then or adapted to today's times?

When we first started GRC we were operating as a mutual aid and within the first year we saw the need for us to become a non-profit to better be able to fund our operation. At the start, our main priority was getting people supplies as fast as we could. We would literally do grocery runs for people and communities to get them food, cleaning supplies, health essentials, etc. Although that's still a big core of what we do under our pillar of "Immediate Impact", we added additional pillars (Education and Community Development) to our work that focus on longer lasting solutions to these equity problems.



LUMPEN, ISSUE #141, VOL. 32

Why is it important or necessary that this work is done via strategies of mutual aid? Would you rather the government or a charity filled this need? How would it be different if they did?

Our strategy today is still that of when we started, our funding has just changed. As a non-profit we are able to receive larger grant support from organizations and companies that help us expand our offerings and reach. We love that we are able to be a part of the conversation to the different avenues of support whether they are coming from government, charities or mutual aid. We believe the unique offering we provide is that we bring exact necessary needs to communities in partnership with other non-profits and mutual aids. Since Grocery Run Club services the entire Chicago area, it's important for us to work with organizations that are on the ground of their communities to let us know what their communities need. This allows us to be very thoughtful and custom in how we support which we feel is an advantage we have over larger entities that require lots of approval processes

Can you share a story of how positively it has impacted the Little Village community?

Grocery Run Club services all of Chicago, not just solely one community but one of our first larger projects was in Little Village. Together with The Love Fridge, we placed a community fridge outside of Moreno's Liquors and had our friend and artist Esperanza Rosas paint the fridge in a way that brought joy to the community. The fridge was in that location for many months and we filled it fully 1 - 2 times a week. Since then we've worked with a number of community groups in Little Village to help supply their one off distributions to community members.

Fall 2023



WEBSITE WWW.GROCERYRUNCLUB.COM
SOCIALS @GROCERYRUNCLUB @GRCLUB



What is the GRC Run Club?

GRC Run Club is our physical run club that was born a year after our non-profit was founded, in July of 2021. Our name naturally gave way to it and we found it to be an amazing opportunity to be able to gather the BIPOC community under a health and wellness initiative while also running around our favorite city. We wanted to create a free space to be able to empower people to prioritize their health and wellness to live better lives. We host 2, 5k runs each month open to all faces, all paces and also host 1 workout class each month to encourage folks to try something new, whether boxing, yoga, etc.

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How can people get involved or support with any of these initiatives?

If you'd like to support our non-profit Grocery Run Club, you can visit us at groceryrunclub.com to sign up to be a donor. We also post on our Instagram when we have volunteer opportunities that include activities like packing our produce boxes or delivering to families. As the growing season gets nearer in these months, we also love volunteers to come support our community garden in North Lawndale. If you're interested in joining us for a run or workout under GRC Run Club, follow us on Instagram to see when and where our next run is.

THE MUTUAL AID ISSUE

Last but not least, what else can we do to develop thriving communities in our BIPOC neighborhoods?

Something I've learned deeply in this work both through our non-profit and our run club is that we are all humans and neighbors. We are all residents of this beautiful city and we each have unique life circumstances. It goes a long way to think about how we can support our neighbors to live a better and more equitable life and that can happen quicker through community care. If we all took time to think about our neighbor, our block and our community we would be able to mobilize for us to have the basic things that we need to live the lives we deserve. ♦



Photo Credit: Jae Arnold

The Orange Tent Project

An Interview with Andy Robledo

BY EDMAR

You have seen the orange tents around the city, usually beneath viaducts and in lots by highways. These tents are provided to the houseless for free by a group of Chicagoans led by the The Orange Tent Project (formerly known as Plants for People). The mission of the The Orange Tent Project is pretty simple. They are basically “showing up for our neighbors experiencing homelessness with hope, human connection, and empowerment - one tent, meal, and person at a time.”

During the pandemic you were delivering plants through your project Plants Delivered Chicago. Can you tell why you started that gig?

I started Plants For People after I found myself disenchanted with the corporate world. I'd always had a knack for and love of plants, and decided to take a chance -- what began as a part-time “passion project” became my full-time livelihood. The flexibility that working for myself provided allowed me to spend more time and energy building my “pla(n)tform” and giving back to the community, which is where the nonprofit

came in! Feeding People Through Plants started as a Plants Delivered Chicago initiative in which I donated part of the revenue from plant sales to organizations fighting homelessness in the city, and with the support of community members and donors, it grew into the organization it is today.

How many people have benefited from this program?

At this point coming to our third year in operation we've been able to service tens of thousands Chicago residents.

“Ice fishing tents are designed to hold in heat and withstand high winds, but which also provide much-needed shade in the summer. They're also more spacious and sturdy, compared to summer tents. “

When you discovered a person broke into your truck and took a blanket you decided you had to figure out a way to help the homeless. I imagine it was an epiphany for you. Can you describe what the first steps were to engage in providing help and aid to others?

The first step, honestly, was to stop. That sounds counterintuitive, but I mean that I had to physically stop and talk to people on the street that I had previously passed by. Feeding People Through Plants takes a relationship-led, people-first approach to ending the cycle of homelessness by really building trust and rapport with our neighbors experiencing homelessness, and the only way to achieve that is to stop and have a conversation.

Can you describe the current mission of Orange Tent Project? And do you consider the work of the group a mutual aid project or charity?

Good question. OTP is showing up for our neighbors experiencing homelessness with hope, human connection, and empowerment - one tent, meal, and person at a time. We envision a world in which the services we provide are no longer necessary — that is, a world with affordable and accessible housing, food security for all, universal health care and rehabilitation services; a world in which we care for one another as neighbors. As for the Mutual Aid vs charity question: in a 2020 article on the subject, Nonprofit Quarterly defines Mutual Aid as “Mutual Aid roots itself in the notion that if we all contribute, we come closer to making sure that every-

one's needs are met. Mutual aid, in comparison to charity, is not just a transactional exchange, but also a much-needed exercise in being in community with one another.” Orange Tent Project is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and we are entirely donor-funded; that is, we do not receive grants or government funding. Our approach, as previously mentioned, is relationship-based as opposed to a top-down dictative method. In that sense, I suppose I'd classify our work as mutual aid.

The orange tents that you have chosen as a stopgap housing solution are visible all over Chicago. Why these tents? And how do you decide who to help and when?

Ice fishing tents are designed to hold in heat and withstand high winds, but which also provide much-needed shade in the summer. They're also more spacious and sturdy, compared to summer tents. The orange tents are not a permanent solution; they were never meant to be. Rather, the purpose of





the insulated structures is to meet one of the most basic needs of Maslow's Hierarchy while individuals experiencing homelessness await housing placement. We believe, in accordance with research on Social Determinants of Health, that shelter, sustenance, and physical safety are vital first steps to addressing larger obstacles such as drug addiction and mental illness. Due to the high demand and strain upon housing programs, the reality is that many of our neighbors experiencing homelessness face several weeks on waitlists for placement in a housing program. Through our relationship-led tent building and meal distribution initiatives, our team is able to not only connect individuals to housing programs, but also bridge the gap between the street and their new home by providing a warmer place to stay while they wait. Our expansive network of partner organizations allows us to continue introducing neighbors to additional resources that may help get them back on their feet, including legal assistance, public benefits access, additional housing opportunities, emergency services, and more. A tent isn't necessarily a good fit for everyone. If an individual experiencing homelessness reaches out to us to request a tent, or if we hear from another neighbor that someone is looking for a tent, we do our best to get in contact with that individual and find a stable place to build. We do have a waitlist for tents because we can only build when we have the money for a tent -- a single tent, plus labor cost, is roughly \$600. Once we have the money for it, we build! For folks who might

move around more frequently, a tent may not be the best option for them and we try to get them connected to other resources.

How has the City of Chicago responded to providing new tents to those who want them?

While we are perhaps best known for our 2022 clash with the city regarding the removal of the ice fishing tents, we are grateful to report that we are actively cooperating and collaborating with the city to address our shared goal of ending the cycle of homelessness. To date, we have built more than 200 insulated shelters, distributed over 10,500 hot meals, transitioned seven neighbors into housing, and connected with countless other nonprofit partners to expand our reach across Chicago. The city has agreed not to remove tents if they are occupied, so we do our best to move someone into a tent after it is vacated.

I have heard from City of Chicago employees working on the Homeless crisis applaud your efforts in providing tents to the homeless, while there are others in the same department who claim that by providing tents to the houseless that you are enabling their continuing to live on the streets. How do you address these claims?

Another great question, and I'm going to refer back to question #4. The tents are not -- and were never meant to be -- a permanent solution to the homelessness crisis. The cycle of homelessness is a complicated one, and I'm really not an expert, but I can say that many of the folks we've encountered are struggling with mental illness and/or addiction. Oftentimes, we have found, seeking medical and rehabilitative services requires a certain amount of stability, and the tents provide that for some folks as they await housing placement or connection to other services. As I said in question 4: We believe, in accordance with research on Social Determinants of Health, that shelter, sustenance, and physical safety are vital first steps to addressing larger obstacles such as drug addiction and mental illness. Due to the high demand and strain upon housing programs, the reality is that many of our neighbors experiencing homelessness face several weeks on waitlists for placement in a housing program. This can be really dangerous in extreme weather; people have frozen to death waiting for housing, and people have suffered heat strokes in the summertime.

Housing is a basic human right. What have you learned through your research are some of the best practices at providing ongoing shelter and housing to those who need it? Where is it done well? How do we address this crisis here in the US? And what would you set up in Chicago if you had the resources?

We have found that housing is the most viable when people are given the opportunity to receive therapy, substance abuse rehabilitation, legal aid, access to employment, and mental health treatment. Living in an encampment often provides a sense of community -- for better or for worse -- that disappears when an individual moves into housing and is suddenly alone. Providing shelter can't just be a "one and done" solution with no treatment follow-up. Our neighbors living on the streets often require more assistance, wraparound services, than just an apartment in order for it to be a sustainable

solution. There are plenty of organizations providing housing services to the community experiencing homelessness, including Thresholds, Above and Beyond Family Recovery Center, and The Night Ministry, but to my knowledge providing wrap-around services to newly housed neighbors isn't something being done on a large scale. I would love to see Chicago allocate the necessary funding and resources to create employment opportunities, provide treatment, and provide resources to people who have been recently housed rather than leaving them to fend for themselves and navigate the system on their own.

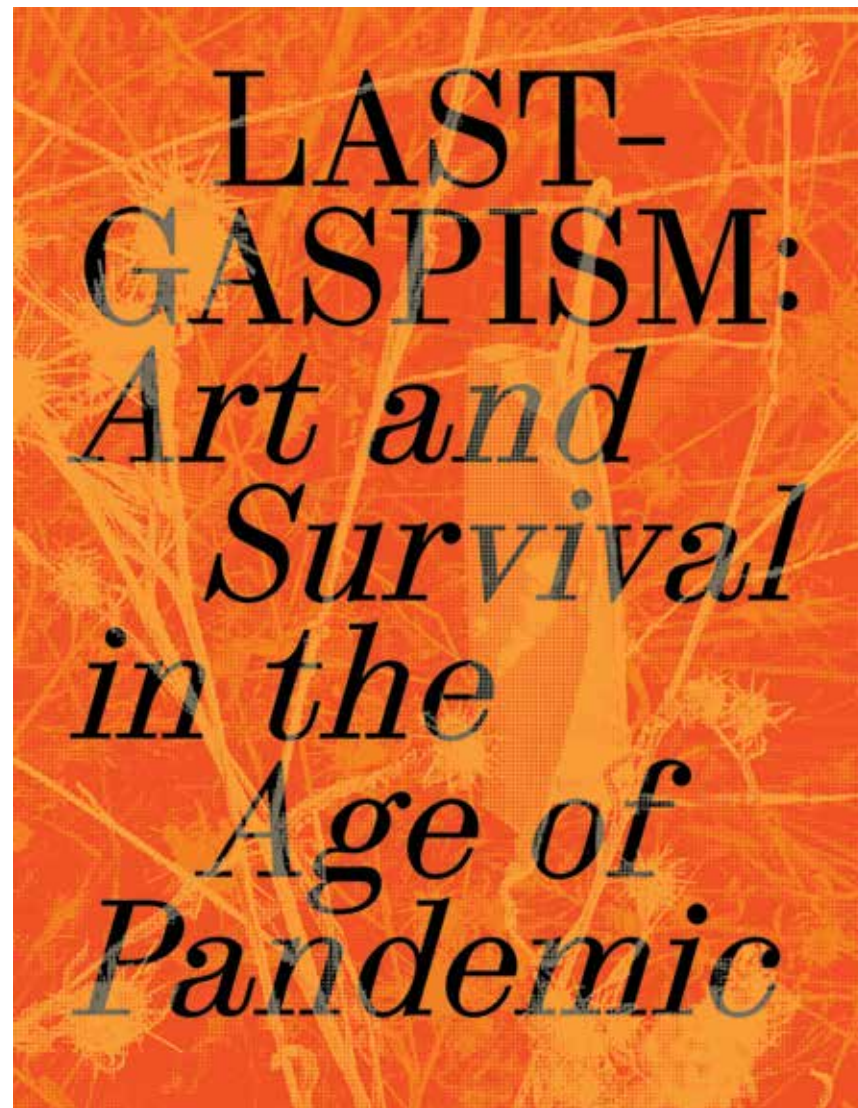
It has been incredible to see the trolling and hate messages from random assholes. They have no clue how incredibly difficult it is to organize a project of this scale. It's just difficult to organize and coordinate ongoing community projects like this on a volunteer basis. Do you have advice for those wanting to start or engage in creating a similar project? How do you deal with fundraising, coordinating members, storing supplies, managing your work and home life etc.

My advice is really to just take it day by day. Listen to the voices and the needs of the community you're serving before taking action and assuming you know what's best. Always protect your energy because you can't do the work if you're not functioning. I'm fortunate to have a strong social media platform and an amazing community of followers, donors, volunteers, and now employees. ♦



Care In Crisis: On the pandemic art of Alicia Grullón

BY DANIEL TUCKER



Cover design for Soberscove Books - design by Dorothy Lin featuring the artwork of Pato Hebert's Lingering series

This essay is a brief excerpt of a longer chapter written in late 2021 for the book *Lastgaspism: Art and Survival in The Age of Pandemic* Soberscove Press: 2022. Edited by Anthony Romero, Daniel Tucker and Dan S. Wang and selected by Hyperallergic as one of the best art books of 2022.

One after another after another. Artist Alicia Grullón spent the early days of the pandemic in March 2020 trying to count ambulance sirens. She lives near a hospital in the Bronx, a borough of New York City, and the cases in her area eventually rose to over ten thousand by mid-April, the highest rate of hospitalization and death resulting from COVID-19 in the city. Counting became impossible. [1]

Grullón later reflected that “it simply got to be too many at a time, and I did not want to normalize any of it because the overall handling of the crisis had been abysmal. Another week in, I stopped looking at the time. COVID broke what was familiar to me . . . Aside from immediate family living with me, the only other human beings I would see were essential workers.” [2]

The term “essential workers” emerged as a part of the pandemic lexicon, but it actually originated during World War I. The concept was used to recognize the workers who performed duties required for basic domestic survival and the “all-out production” necessitated by the war effort. In the context of COVID-19, the category was expanded, offering an opportunity to value work that was historically lower paid and increasingly hazardous, from grocery store workers to health care workers. [3]

While it could be argued that “care” also became a key word in the pandemic lexicon, in my experience as an educator it had emerged in recent years as a framework that appealed to students as a way to grapple with and update the feminist project of exploring the interconnectedness of the personal and the political.[4] “Care” was also already on the tongues of a growing number of social theorists, artists, and community organizers, alike, in the language connecting the struggles involving health, domestic life, the organization of time, and the visibility of the marginalized workers who keep society functioning, which Grullón’s statement so elegantly captures.

And while COVID-19 touched everyone, what it felt like individually had everything to do with where one was located at the intersection of class, race, and geography. The pandemic also laid bare the contradictions of

age, disability, and even nutrition: Nursing homes were flooded with the virus, representing the largest concentration of death tolls at 40 percent of the nation’s total (for both residents and workers). [5] Disabled people, who had fought for generations to get publicly funded support for their independence, were now navigating new vulnerabilities and abandonment. Food workers, from farmers to delivery workers and grocery store cashiers, became “essential” overnight as food insecurity rose. People stranded at home felt their bodies in new ways after the numbing business of staying busy had come to a halt; some discovered self-care, others suffered. Kids were sent home from schools, leaving their parents to perform childcare and teaching roles, or not, depending on their status as workers-from-home, essential, or unemployed. This event suddenly woke everyone to what the care work advocate Ai-Jen Poo has been calling, for many years, “the work that makes all other work possible”. [6]

It doesn’t ever feel good to feel useless. Philosopher Donatella Di Cesare has described 2020 as the “anxious existence within the parenthesis,” pointing out that the impact it has had on mental health has been tremendous.[7] One question emerging from within the parenthesis is about being useful: about not being useful to exploitative jobs, about jobs that were deemed essential overnight, but also about being useful to the rising tide of justice movements, of being useful toward the self-care or community care. The pandemic has generated a number of new texts with calls for rethinking care, including four from Verso Books alone with titles such as *The Politics of Care: From COVID-19 to Black Lives Matter*; *Care Manifesto: The Politics of Interdependence*; *The Care Crisis: What Caused It and How Can We End It?*; and *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*. [8]

In this context food insecurity spiked due to changes in store hours and policies; episodes of consumer hoarding; rising food costs amid a massive wave of layoffs and reduced hours; and many populations, particularly the elderly and immunocompromised, simply being unsafe in public spaces with inconsistent physical distancing measures. Concurrently, grocery delivery services boomed in accordance with the parasitic nature of the gig economy. Since the pandemic began, the



Alicia Grullón, April 28, 2020: As Amazon, Walmart, and Others Profit amid Coronavirus Crisis, Their Essential Workers Plan Unprecedented Strike— <https://theintercept.com/2020/04/28/coronavirus-may-1-strike-sickout-amazon-tar-get-whole-foods/>, 2020. Archival color dye sublimation print on aluminum, 40 x 60 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

streets, otherwise quiet due to workplace closures and stay-at-home orders, have been abuzz with doubled-parked delivery drivers.

Numerous religious, social-service, and activist organizations quickly adapted to distribute meals and groceries. At the People’s Kitchen—where I worked solidarity shifts during the first year of the pandemic—unemployed chefs, workers, artists, and activists have committed to distributing 215 restaurant-quality hot meals a day. Some

groups have opted to fill public refrigerators with free groceries. In a particularly tech-savvy operation that I was involved with in the summer of 2020, a refrigerated warehouse was staffed by unemployed workers for three shifts a day to assemble boxes of donated food. The group was able to make use of a commercial delivery app designed for truckers, which helped volunteers go to a neighborhood pickup site with their deliveries pre-sequenced for the easiest possible movement from home to

home. In a weird twist, the logistics revolution that had led to the homogenization of store food shelves has come to aid mutual-aid programs!

Back in the Bronx, Grullón, the artist who had given up counting the unending sirens, was part of a mutual-aid group, the North Bronx Collective, formed along with Vani Kannan, LoriKim Alexander, Lucy Mercado, and Francheska Alcantara. The group started a food distribution program that was eventually handed off to a local church. They then focused their energy on restoring, remediating, and starting to garden in a disinvested area owned by the park district, which Grullón has been involved with for several years.[9] Anecdotaly, this kind of engagement in mutual aid by artists seemed to blossom widely—which could be read, depending on who you ask, as adding an increased centrality of activism to today’s art activism, or conversely, as meaning that that artists might be inclined to make greater distinctions between what constitutes solidarity and what constitutes their art.

At the start of the pandemic, Grullón began a new series of self-portrait photographs produced in her home, where she was quarantining. In the series “March to June: At Home with Essential Workers” (2020), the title of each work includes the date when it was taken and a hyperlink to a picture of the essential worker whom Grullón dresses as in the portrait. For instance, there is “March 31, 2020: Rikers Island Prisoners Are Being Offered PPE and \$6 an Hour to Dig Mass Graves <https://theintercept.com/2020/03/31/rikers-island-coronavirus-mass-graves/>”, in which the artist stands, barefoot, in what appears to be a household entryway or hallway, wearing an orange prison jumpsuit, her arms hanging at her side and gaze looking slightly to the right of the camera, while to her left hangs a chandelier with some missing bulbs.

And then there is “April 28, 2020: As Amazon, Walmart, and Others Profit amid Coronavirus Crisis, Their Essential Workers Plan Unprecedented Strike—<https://theintercept.com/2020/04/28/coronavirus-may-1-strike-sickout-amazon-target-whole-foods/>”. In this image, the artist mounts a bicycle, a helmet

and a bag hanging over the handlebars, again with her gaze directed at the camera, her facemask hanging below her nose but covering her mouth. This time, the setting is a kitchen, complete with dishes in a dish rack and a microwave in the background.[10] Rather than oscillating between private and public, the images hold both spheres in the same photograph. One figure is depicted simultaneously as an iconic essential worker who is transported from their workplace to a personal, domestic space. The URLs and article headlines incorporated into the titles of the artworks add an additional register, that of media representation and dissemination, where the reported narratives offer context. In these images, Grullón becomes the essential workers outside—a postal worker, food delivery person, and a nurse—in an act of empathy, but she also remains physically distanced inside her own home in an act of solidarity. These aesthetic choices say a lot about the artist’s analysis of the interconnectedness of struggles, and also reflect the practical parameters of a pandemic lockdown.

To the extent that a defining characteristic of the pandemic-era artwork may be emerging, it can be directly connected to the politics of care. While earlier advocacy and theorization focused on valuing all of the things that care work and essential work enable, there is now a push to reframe care work as vital and central to the meaning of life itself—to understand care work as the work of being human. The pandemic has promoted a reappraisal of the ways in which we live. It has led to heightened scrutiny about how public health systems have historically informed the development of the communities in which we live, and it has made clear that this largely invisible system of institutions and infrastructures is precarious and disinvested. The pandemic has also led to a reappraisal of work, about what is valued and who is valued. Looking ahead, the premise that our work could be seen and valued as socially useful, and that the towns and cities we live in could be places where people feel safe and cared for must guide how we approach public policies, as well as the ways in which we simply relate to one another. The aesthetic, social, and political experiments of this moment will undoubtedly have lasting effects on what art and activism look like moving forward, so let’s give them the care they deserve now. Our future will be better for it. ♦

Footnotes

1 See R. K. Wadhera et al., “Variation in COVID-19 Hospitalizations and Deaths across New York City Boroughs,” *JAMA* 321, no. 21 (April 2020): 2192–95, doi:10.1001/jama.2020.7197.

2 Alicia Grullón, “Hot City: At Home with Essential Workers,” *Verso* (blog), August 27, 2020, <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/4841-hot-city-at-home-with-essential-workers>.

3 Jennifer Klein, “Essential Workers—Definition, History, and Importance,” *WSHU*, September 25, 2020, <https://www.wshu.org/post/essential-workers-definition-history-and-importance#stream/0>.

4 Student projects on this theme included “Levels of Care” (@levels.of.care), Instagram, 2021, <https://www.instagram.com/levels.of.care/>; and “Care Crisis: A Time Capsule about Art & Curating during a Pandemic from Students at Moore College of Art & Design,” *Care Crisis* WordPress, 2021, <https://carecrisis.wordpress.com/>.

5 “Nearly One-Third of U.S. Coronavirus Deaths Are Linked to Nursing Homes,” *New York Times*, June 2, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/coronavirus-nursing-homes.html>.

6 “Ai-Jen Poo: The Work that Makes All Other Work Possible,” *Ted.com*, December 7, 2018, https://www.ted.com/talks/ai_jen_poo_the_work_that_makes_all_other_work_possible.

7 Donatella Di Cesare, *Immunodemocracy: Capitalist Asphyxia* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2021), 85.

8 Boston Review, ed., *Politics of Care from COVID-19 to Black Lives Matter* (Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2020); *The Care Collective, Care Manifesto: The Politics of Interdependence* (Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2020); Emma Dowling, *The Care Crisis: What Caused It and How Can We End It?* (Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2021); Dean Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity during this Crisis (and the Next)* (Brooklyn: Verso Books, 2020).

9 Hakim Bishara, “Bronx Artists Collaborated to Refurbish Community Park until the City Locked Them Out,” *Hyperallergic*, April 6, 2021, <https://hyperallergic.com/632855/north-bronx-collective-refurbish-tib-betts-tail-nyc-parks-locked-out/>. See also North Bronx Collective, “Why NYC Mutual Aid Workers Are Cutting Ties with World Central Kitchen,” *Medium*, June 18, 2020, <https://medium.com/@northbronx-mutualaid/why-nyc-mutual-aid-workers-are-cutting-ties-with-world-central-kitchen-335cfec40189>; and North Bronx Collective, “Hot City: Reimagining Food Justice in an Uprising,” *Verso Books Hot City* (blog), October 14, 2020, <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/4875-hot-city-re-imagining-food-justice-in-an-uprising>.

10 Alicia Grullón, *March to June: At Home with Essential Workers*, online exhibition, July 23–November 23, 2020, Bronx Museum of the Arts, 2020, <http://www.bronxmuseum.org/index.php/exhibitions/alicia-grullon-march-to-june-at-home-with-essential-workers-online-exhibition>.

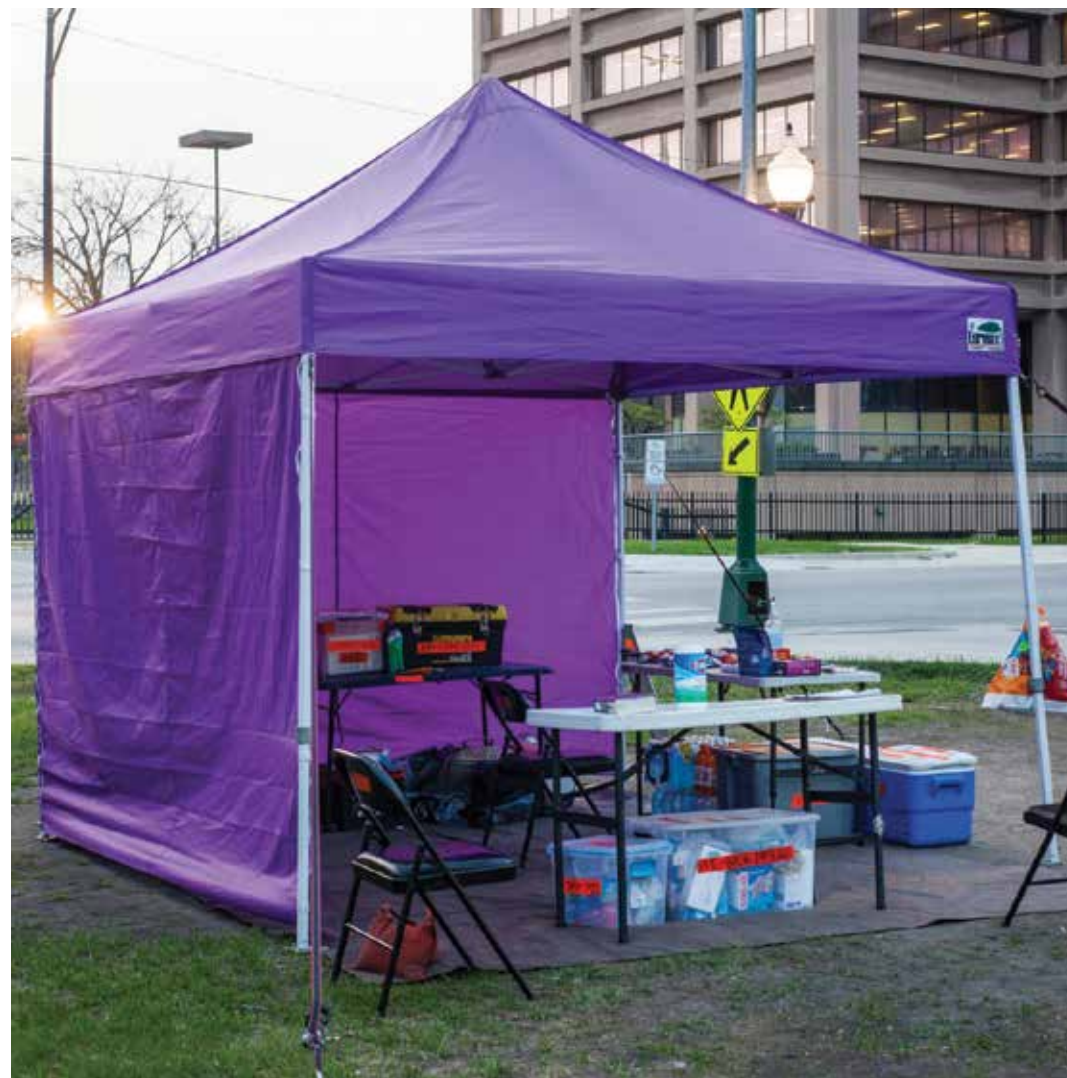


Alicia Grullón, April 13, 2020: NYC Death Toll Jumps by 3,700 after Uncounted Fatalities Are Added, <https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/albany/story/2020/04/14/new-york-city-coronavirus-death-toll-jumps-by-3-700-after-uncounted-fatalities-are-added-1275931>, 2020. Archival color dye sublimation print on aluminum, 40 × 60 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Chicago Community Jail Support

A few Questions with Chris Walsh and Andrew Mausert-Mooney

BY NICK WYLIE



Chicago Community Jail Support (CCJS) is a daily, on the ground, grassroots mutual aid project run completely by volunteers. Their mission is to assist anyone being released from Cook County Jail, their loved ones, and the surrounding community.

CCJS focuses on providing direct aid that meets the immediate needs of those being released with phone calls, warm clothing, snacks, drinks, PPE, safe transportation home, and emergency housing. They are present outside the jail at the corner of 27th Street and California Blvd every day from 5 PM to 10 PM (and extend to 11 PM on weekends).

How and when did you get involved in CCJS? What are some other ways people have joined up?

Chris Walsh: After the George Floyd uprising, I realized I had a lot to learn after watching so much police brutality live in the streets, even at some smaller scale climate change protests I was a part of that year too. It really made me question what the point of police even is, if we can't even gather and complain about where we are heading on the climate lol.

So I started reading books to gather some context I was missing and started with black historical leaders such as Malcom X, Huey Newton and Fred Hampton which then lead me to want to learn more about community building and I ended up reading We Do this 'til we free us by Mariame Kaba. From there I decided to start my abolitionist journey with CCJS and figure things out from there and I been trying to go every Saturday I could since April 22'

What have you noticed people need most when getting out of Cook County Jail?

Chirs: Forget the material goods, people are usually just happy to be treated like a human being again after leaving the Jail. It's really unfortunate to hear about the constant neglect that goes on inside. I make sure to try to give folks a friendly interaction full of compassion because you never know if they'd been held for just a night or even longer. I feel like the most important asset we offer is our cell phones so everyone can connect with their loved ones to get back home.

What do you wish you could do to help folks getting out that you're sometimes not able to offer?

Andrew Mausert-Mooney: One thing that's meaningful to me about CCJS is that it's a specific type of need that isn't being addressed by the state or non-profits or charities or churches. If your family/friends can't make it out to ccjs for whatever reason often your only hope in getting home/out of the cold is an expensive cab ride, waiting at a dangerous Popeyes down the street (if they are open) and you don't have any cash or cellphone because the arresting cops take this from you and keep it at the arresting cop shops, purely out of cruelty (they transfer and hold belts and shoelaces for instance... So why

Photo Credit: Annette Reyna



couldn't they transfer your wallet and cell?). In this way (and that our conversations w people being released and families waiting to pick them up are immediately political given we have to distinguish ourselves from the cops and CO's that hang around, by saying stuff like "we are against Chicago police"). In this way CCJS work is at least partially responding to the important question/ criticism being asked of mutual aid projects: what's the difference between this and charity, and aren't the charities often more effective at doing this work?

The work that CCJS does not only provides aid but also advocates for the abolition of police and prisons. How do you communicate these ideas to folks getting out and the families waiting for them? Is it hard to convince people that we don't need cops or prisons?

Chris: We do talk to folks interested in hearing more about the abolition of these systems, yes. I don't feel like it's very hard to convince anyone who is outside the jail on these topics though. Folks are told the wrong time their loved ones are getting out and end up having to sit out there for hours with no update, the energy is pretty clear that the system is broken. If anything we just make sure to provide everyone out their care and make it clear that we, the people, are helping each other, while the systems continue to harm everyone in its path. Abolition of these systems becomes the natural path forward afterwards.

Andrew: CCJS includes a wide range of ideological stances among it's members including those (like me!) who aren't prison/cop abolitionists (I support Cuban police for instance, I support locking up us killer cops and war criminals in prisons). There aren't any determined ideological lines that one follows as a condition of being a CCJS volunteer. Members of jail support are broadly progressive, including socialists, communists, anarchists and radicals. Many volunteers are prison abolitionists while others think those prisons are adequate buildings to, under a different people-powered leadership, lock up police and other war criminals who currently never seem to need a ride home from cook county.

How can people get involved?

There are infinite opportunities to get involved with our work (You don't need a car! You can work from home!). Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join our community.

You can learn more and help amplify Chicago Community Jail Support's message by visiting their webpage or following their Instagram account (@chicommunityjailsupport). You can support the group by donating here or on CashApp (\$ChicagoJS). Readers can also purchase needed supplies from the Target registry here.

Finally, you can sign up to volunteer with Chicago Community Jail Support by emailing chicommunityjailsup@gmail.com.

How can people support this work from afar (with money, time, word-spreading)?

Although CCJS particularly needs drivers and weekend shift coverage, volunteers can adapt their contributions to match their schedule/capacity and can also provide remote support through various working groups. Other ways that Chicago Community Jail Support hopes that you can support their goals are:

1. Calling/emailing Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, or Mayor Lori Lightfoot and demand that they improve conditions at Cook County Jail.
2. Support the Coalition to End Money Bond and other abolitionist efforts to dismantle the system of mass incarceration and inhumane treatment.
3. Support other mutual aids in your neighborhood/community and keep your community members safe by giving of your time and resources and meeting people where they are. We are surviving and sustaining jail support efforts because of our connections and partnerships with other mutual aids. ♦

Love Fridge Chicago

A Conversation with Eric Von Haynes of Love Fridge Chicago

BY EMILY GREEN



Love Fridge, Mc Kinley Park

The Love Fridge Chicago is a volunteer mutual aid organization launched in July 2020 in direct response to the precarity of food access as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Love Fridge was founded on the principle that feeding oneself is a right, not a privilege. Love and generosity are the underlying tenets of Love Fridge, as well as connecting deeply with different communities and neighborhoods throughout the city.

Emily: Tell me about the founding of Love Fridge Chicago?

Eric Von Haynes: In the early days of the pandemic, I was simply thinking of being of service to my community in any way I could. I was producing printed matter for individuals on the streets; bringing attention to topics including police brutality, the teachers' strike, Black & Brown Solidarity, and Self Determination to create awareness and raise capital for groups working on the front lines. I work nationally with a group of Risograph printers in a group called the Print Justice League. The Love Fridge Network was sparked after having conversations with Ramón Norwood (Radius Etc), a dear friend and a co-founder of the Love Fridge program, about creating community fridges in Chicago after seeing fridges appearing in the boroughs of New York. He was there at the time. He helped connect us to others in the NY movement. We worked on building a team and starting to launch sites. We attended national meetings with individuals interested in creating locations in other states. Those meetings helped shape the tactics of The Love Fridge Network. I'm grateful for the council of Ernst Bertone Oehninger who helped co-found Freedged, which in 2014 started with 10 community fridges in Northern California. Ernst offered support in those early days that helped me work on tactics that fit Chicago. I was inspired as well by the work of the Black Panther's Free Breakfast Program, the German Community Fridge movement, Food Not Bombs, and a big inspiration is the work of Krzysztof Wodiczko, specifically the design of the Homeless Vehicle (1980).

We began creating a space to organize that summer. We set up our first community Fridge within a few weeks. The Love Shack, our Flagship, was installed in Little Village by James Wurm in July 2020, and within those first few months, we launched a dozen fridges. James Wurm is a Host, a Spoke, and a co-founder. James builds shelters and pantries and moves fridges across Chicago. I assisted my daughter Ella to paint sites. Ella picked the colors, and we painted the shelters at the Love Shack (Little Village) and the Fridge on Marz (Bridgeport). Host and the community are key to the community fridges. Presently, Love Fridge Spokes include James Wurm, Lisa Armstrong, Velma Smith, Risa Haynes, Anna Spektor, and Eric Hotchkiss. We work with mutual aid groups

across Chicago and are part of the Chicago Food Sovereignty Coalition. The list of individuals that provide support for sites is long. I've met many through food distribution days, our Town Halls, and meetings I have with Coalition Members. While we work with volunteers across Chicago, community members clean, repair, and offer food to sites independently. The Fridges belong to the community.

What projects outside of the fridges themselves is Love Fridge engaged in?

Outreach is a major component of our work. We set up Town Halls across Chicago and interact via farmers' markets and gatherings. We recently participated in a group art show at UIC Gallery 400 about community care. Currently, I'm working with a group of students at UIC on a solar build and We are working on integrating aggregate data collection into our Love Fridge Map. We have a program called Full Circle, where we work with chefs to create meals that are distributed to sites. I'm currently working on a kit for Homeless individuals that we will distribute with our MA partners.

What are your thoughts on the intersection of nonprofits and mutual aid work?

...it's practicing mutual aid within this larger group scenario. It's an anarchist space- most people who have agency within it are coming from other sectors and using their skill sets to help the community in this way, not wanting anything. And then the reciprocal part is what we're always working toward. I think that there are some technicalities to mutual aid when you start talking about it as an organ, as a structure. And one of those is, how you make decisions and who has access to the information. How transparent is it?

Even for grants, we had to get set up with Open Collective. We had to get that [fiscal sponsorship] to move fluidly. People are donating money to us, which is something we respect and are grateful for. It was never set up for that. So, it became an issue we had to start dealing with because we'll utilize the funds, but we never wanted to create a scenario where we were building something that required outside funds. And that's the thing with an NFP; it's built on a system where you have to prove- for grants and things- you have to show some kind of

return. The way our fridge works specifically, we don't ask for your data.

I don't think there's a good or bad. The reality is we spend capital- like the initiatives we do- those are only created through extensions through capital. Like being able to pay chefs for their time, help a volunteer when their car breaks down, and provide emergency funds. We're not built for giving people straight funds, that's not our mission. But there have been scenarios, where it was important to have that fluidity, to be able to help a person. That's a lot harder when you have a different model.

We wanted to create systems where we can pay neighborhood volunteers stipends. We just want people in their neighborhoods to be able to have agency. It's important for us not to reinforce systems that already exist. We're trying to empower those [alternatives]. The Love Fridge launched in Englewood- it was clutch that everyone involved was from the area. Keyante Aytch installed the solar system. He is a young man with connections to the neighborhood that works for Grow Greater Englewood and Getting Grown Collective.

So, there are ebbs and flows- which is the human condition anyway. It's far from perfect. We're always learning. That's the fun of it too. It is "the beautiful struggle," right? It is. What we're doing- it's absurd that we have to do it. The other thing is just how much skill-sharing there is. I'm not saying that an NFP can't do that, but it's built for the efficiency of meeting a goal, and not everything Love Fridge does, if you put it underneath that model, is efficient. I like systems and things like that, but what I love about what this program does for me is it keeps me humble and present in the idea of what it is to be human. So that's the method- just being present, looking, watching, and learning from that.

What about sustainability?

What sustainability means to the Love Fridge is a lot of things: optimal fridges, optimal pantries, off-grid so they can go places and not be tethered to a structure or a host, making sure that it's accessible. There's a young man that I work with, Jackson Schorer, who designed an accessi-

bility handle that allows you to open the fridge with little leverage. Long term, it's about creating something that builds trust because that's a lot of what our program is built on- trust and cultural capital. And I think that's mutual aid, too; we're dependent on the support of the community versus grants, and that can waiver.

Things took off for you quickly. You went from 3 fridges to dozens in a matter of a few months.

We had to slow down intentionally. We never intended to have as many. We started early. There was a lot of energy, there were a lot of allies, and with that came a lot of exuberance. We seized the moment, but within that, we learned a lot. We stubbed our toes a bit. There're a few sites that don't exist anymore, but there's even poetry in that because the fridges were moved to other spots, and so their stories continue. As a group, we had to understand that we want these sites to be permanent- as permanent as possible- but they may not always be. So, we have a system for if we do have to move and how we engage with the community. Because it's the relationship people form with that space. And then we're moving this [fridge] and now folks have to go further- which is enough to deter them from getting resources. Just learning all those things was important early on. And I don't know if it would have happened if we had one or two fridges. But we decided that if we were going to do that, we had to have the host.

Can you expand on that?

There's a system of vetting and figuring out hosts. Sometimes, we have onboarding, and we'll go through sessions with people and make suggestions as on how to start a community fridge, and we'll give them all our specs and all the information. Everything we do is open source. That's the plan- to always share all of this. But sometimes, we just don't align on all of our values- that's not always important, but it's important if they're going to be in the Love Fridge network. And sometimes, we try to tell people that this is anarchy. Do whatever you want, but if you want to be within our network, there are things that we just don't do. It all comes down to making sure that we are community-focused; we don't turn into a marketing campaign.



Love Fridge, Back of the Yards

Right, there's not a lot of Love Fridge branding in general, that I see.

Purposefully. We do a tremendous amount of hand-to-hand fliers, Riso, custom... there are six languages we print all our guides in. But it's all like a 20-foot rule- it's on-site, around sites, or individuals from MA groups handing them out. I've printed hundreds of thousands of items at this point and passed all over Chicago to inform people of these things. But that's the energy. That's the way we like hand-to-hand. So, we do some marketing, our newsletter, things like that. It's all community-focused. Sometimes I think that social media can make people feel like they have a larger reach than they do based on just the popularity of things. And I enjoy the communication we get from our IG. But that's not necessarily the population that's out there volunteering.

To a certain extent that "popularity" feels hopeful to me, but I also wonder about potential pitfalls.

It's nomenclature, right? At the end of the day, humans will- when something's on

trend- they will use that to their advantage. I mean it's just part of human nature. I see individuals' language sometimes invoking mutual aid where I disagree- it's like MA is "give me some money." But where is the reciprocal part? I'm not an expert. I'm learning all the time and unlearning. Part of that core belief for me is not policing. No one should be trying to define it narrowly. If you're working towards something reciprocal, that's the core part of it- you're trying to sustain or create at least a system where it can be reciprocated and not transactionally. It's not like I'm trading you a can of beans for a can of coffee. It's also understanding that time is so valuable.

I just try to use my skill- it makes me feel connected. During the height of the Pandemic, I was happy to have my studio, and have that place to burn off anxiety. It felt great to be able to be of service and to be able to use that anxiety and push it into something that could be useful versus talking to some of my comrades, and they're like, "it's over, man, game over." No, it's just a different chapter. There are other ways of dealing with anxiety in this imposed scarcity

that's going on. I hope that comes out in our food sovereignty work- to reinforce that it's absurd that we have fridges out in the streets and people are daily getting their meals from [them]. We've been doing it for almost three years and it's community-focused- just says a lot to me about civilization. That's what mutual aid is to me.

Long term, we want to have spaces where people can grow and other common areas. That's why we work with community gardens and within the [Chicago Food Sovereignty] Coalition's larger mission- we're in alignment with that. Getting some land out south and spaces like that would be great. That's kind of the long-term strategy because of the issues those areas can have, that owning a space would be optimal there. We're independent, but Open Collective operates as our fiscal sponsor. And that allows us to think long-term. They're international, which was important to me. They sponsor MA groups around the world.

Why is that important to you?

As they learn, we learn. Which is another part of this, to learn together. ♦



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Market Box: A Case Study in Mutual Aid

Interview with Maira Khwaja and Hannah Nyhart

BY ERIN DRAIN

In the spring of 2020, a small group of colleagues, friends, and neighbors responded to the emerging pandemic while challenging the assumptions and presumptions of traditional food aid. Three and a half years and three hundred volunteers later, the Market Box mutual aid project supports a south side network of free, healthy food, all based on these core principles: community care, ethical food systems, trust, people-powered info-sharing, and the idea that a community can determine and satisfy its own wants needs.

Erin Drain (*STOCK Journal*, *Lumpen Times*, *Mash Tun*) met with two of Market Box's cofounders, Maira Khwaja and Hannah Nyhart, to learn about the history and vision of the organization. The selections from their interview have been edited for length and clarity.

Background

Many of the Market Box cofounders work in Woodlawn at the 61st and Blackstone Experimental Station campus, which is home to the 61st Street Farmers Market, Build Coffee, the Invisible Institute, the Southside Weekly, and other community organizations. When most public spaces in Chicago closed in late March 2020, they asked themselves, "Who is a part of our ecosystem that we're not seeing anymore, and what do they need?"

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The group was inspired by online conversations about network mapping hosted by abolitionist scholars Mariame Kaba and Dean Spade, and developed a strategy that would allow them to start hyper-locally while moving swiftly.

Maira Khwaja recalls,

What we landed on is: the farmers markets had shut down. We knew that a lot of people shop at the market on Link, and [at that time] the pivot to online grocery ordering didn't allow you to use Link. Our initial goal was: what if we're able to just source food from all the vendors that we know and essentially try to get a box of stuff from the farmers market to 40 families in Woodlawn?

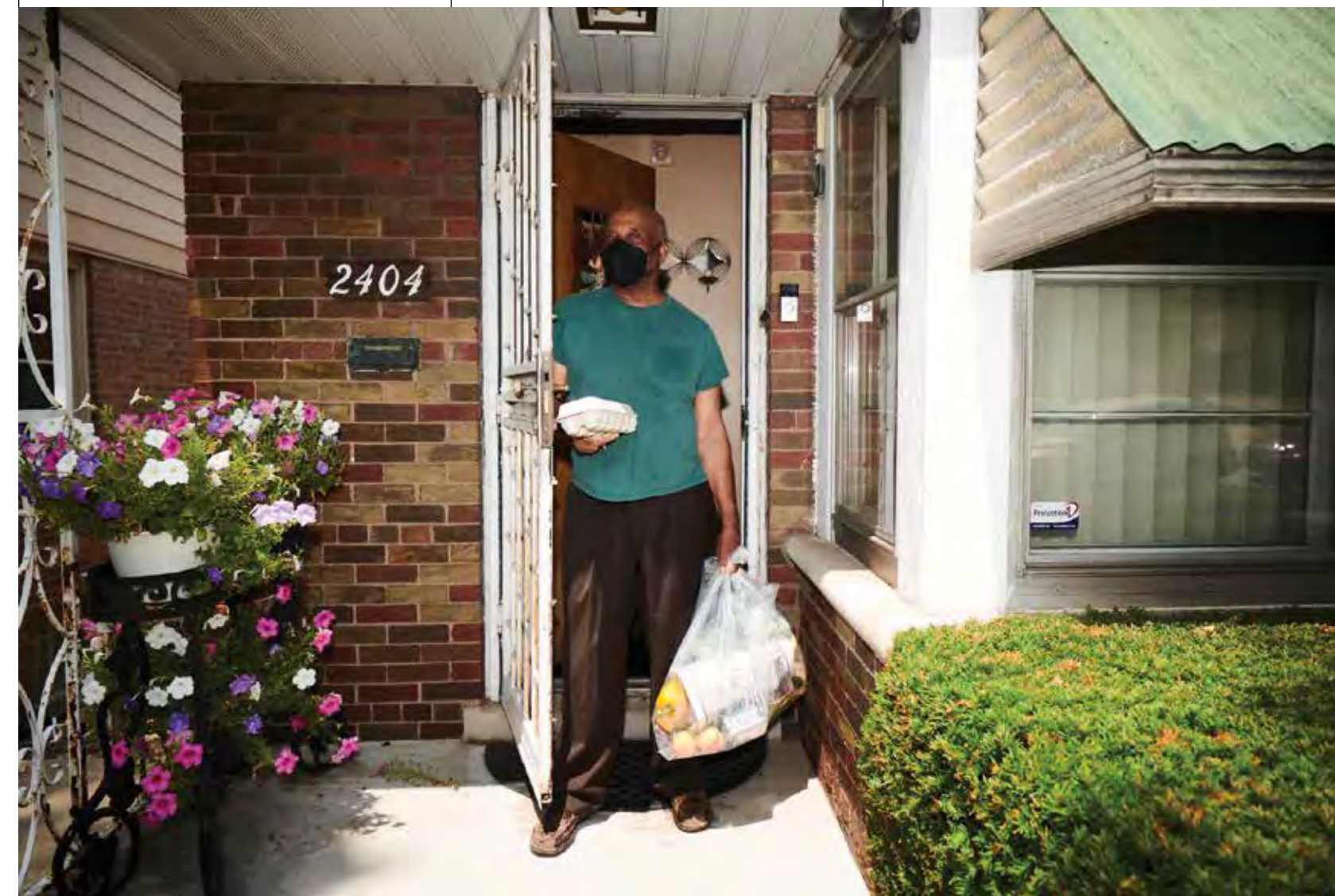
**According to the Illinois Department of Human Services website, Link cards now can be used to purchase SNAP-eligible groceries online from some retailers, but the benefits do not cover delivery costs. -Erin*

Today, Market Box delivers food and resources to over 400 households. The sustainability of this operation relies in part on a network of rotating volunteers and consistent wholesale supply—primarily from Local Foods, Chicago's first wholesaler of exclusively local foods. But more than this, the team credits their expansion of service to the recipients themselves, who share what they know about who is in need in their neighborhoods. As Hannah Nyhart describes, this example of mutuality is not just ethical, it works.

When we think about mutual aid, we think about this ecosystem that involves overlapping communities of volunteers and recipients, that involves the farmers that are sourcing to us. And everyone in that community is putting different things in and getting different things out. Being trust-based, allowing for referrals, allowing for people to say, 'Hey, can I grab an extra bag for my neighbor?' allows us to use the network far beyond what we could do by ourselves.

And so, it's not just about meeting people where they're at. Many systems of aid that rely on means testing or rely on ID verification are missing out on this huge resource of networks and the interconnectedness

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that people in community with each other already have. I spent one morning, my whole morning doing this reverse phone tree where every lady that I talked to would have a neighbor, or somebody from her church, or her sister or her aunt, and say, 'Oh, she should be on the [Market Box distribution] list, you should call her.' I didn't know those people, right? And they didn't necessarily all know each other. It was like links in this chain.

COMMUNITY NETWORKS AT WORK

During the protests against the murder of George Floyd in May and June 2020, many south side grocery stores shuttered, and Chicago Public Schools halted its food distribution program. One of the first groups to respond to this sudden acceleration of food apartheid on the south side was The People's Grab-n-Go, which provided free food and toiletries each Monday in front of Burke Elementary in Washington Park, just two miles northwest of Woodlawn. By

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partnering with this group, and meeting the neighbors who were picking up supplies, Market Box initiated its "slow and steady building of relationships."

According to Khwaja,

I would be there every Monday basically walking through the line and signing people up for Market Box, and [those signups] tended to be not just the people that were in line, [but people asking] 'Can I sign up this person in my life that I know needs it?'

And that is really a big part of how that list grew; we really made those connections on the ground ourselves, but also as an act of mutuality: people on the list signing up their friend, their neighbor, their cousin. And so, while we might not personally have a deep relationship with everyone on the list, you could network map out the entirety of Market Box, and all the people have a connection.

When Jamie Phelps Proctor, senior account executive at Local Foods, read about Market

THE MUTUAL AID ISSUE

Box in Block Club in September 2020, he immediately understood that this model could benefit the farmers and other small businesses he represents just as much as it would the recipients of the food aid. Market Box pays a wholesale business rate for the fresh food (eggs, meat, produce) it purchases through Local Foods—the same as a grocer or restaurateur. In contrast to organizations that rely on donations from food suppliers; these are nearly always nonperishable goods, and while they are appreciated, there is a countrywide vacuum of fresh food—food that people actually want and deserve to eat—for people receiving food aid. The fundamental feature that distinguishes mutual aid from charity is that it is an ecosystem of multidirectional benefits that work for everyone involved. Maira Khwaja commented on this advantage of mutual aid as well:

Farmers were also facing a big economic hit during the beginning of the pandemic. And so, we were a steady source of income and support for the farmers we were buying from. When we make fundraising pitches,



we're always saying, 'Your dollar is going two ways. You're not only supporting healthy food networks within the south side, but you're also supporting local agriculture.' It feels more critical and crucial than ever to make sure we have a vibrant, healthy, local Midwest agriculture system.

Mutual Aid As A Model of Care

The issue of getting food to people who need it is a highly public national conversation that largely relies on convoluted public, private, and nonprofit local solutions. The state of Illinois was among the first in the US to embrace a benefits matching program (Link Up Illinois), which doubles the value of every dollar used to buy produce at a farmers market, farm stand, food co-op, or independent grocer. Illinois is also home to prominent food aid organizations, often staffed by wonderful people trying their best to solve this enormous problem within long-ingrained operational constraints, such as means testing, i.e. income thresholds, proof

of work, proof of residence. Many organizations doing good work for people may be stuck using means testing resources to measure their impact, which is a burden placed on them by state and institutional funders.

Means testing is just one of the cruel twists built into legacy systems of food aid: the burden of accessing basic human necessities falls on the people in need. The level of bureaucracy to prove eligibility and sign up for programs like SNAP, Link, WIC, and other programs that rely on means testing is a serious barrier to so many. On top of eligibility requirements, getting the food itself can prove a bigger challenge, even without a global pandemic to contend with. Securing transportation to a physical place at a limited time and date presents intense challenges for many people, and most of all for community elders, caregivers, unhoused people, and parents of young children.

As Khawaj notes,

Part of why people can't just go to the food bank and pick up a bag for their neighbor is that it's just 'One bag, one ID.'

People always say, 'You can work your way out of poverty,' right? But once you cross a certain [income] threshold, now all of a sudden you can't afford health care, and you won't be given health care; you can't receive aid, and you won't be given aid.

MMarket Box ethics assert that accessibility and trust work well together, and that means testing is anathema to a standard of trust-based care. Less philosophically, if the goal of food aid is to feed people, then means testing and the "morass" it creates is actually less efficient. Says Nyhart,

I think that it's easy to have this framing: 'One of these [options] is efficient and data-oriented and truth-oriented, and it's preventing fraud. And you need this to be well-run and tight and accountable.'

[But] the thing that I keep coming back to over and over again, is that not only does that not align with our ethic, it also doesn't work very well. [If] your goal is to get food to people who need it, there are all kinds of ways that [means testing's] going to get in your way either because the standards that you set are super unrealistic in terms of what people actually need, but also, because it means that there's going to be a whole chunk of people who would qualify for the things that you're saying would qualify them for this aid, and [they] can't make it through the morass of paperwork and proof that they need, just to tell you that they need this thing.

Within our network, roughly 50% of people in our most recent survey qualify for some form of government benefits, whether that's Snap or Medicaid or Medicare. 86% said that Market Box was very important to their family having enough to eat each month. Often people will come on to our waitlist because they've just gotten some kind of job, [and] they've gotten knocked

off of their benefits, and they don't have enough to make ends meet.

The Market Box project demonstrates that means-based systems should not be presumed as necessary standards for all food aid. In that case, their challenge to everyone in this country, from funders to farmers to volunteers and beyond, is simple: imagine systems beyond what we have, because "we as an entire country could do this. We don't actually need hunger." ♦

Learn More

Market Box connects neighbors across the south side from their home base in **The First Presbyterian Church of Chicago** at 64th and Kimbark, which has a long radical tradition of its own. The church shares its space, including several city lots, with Woodlawn Community Garden and many other community groups, while also serving as a home base for artists-in-residence, activists, and young theologians.

Market Box is a project of Ecosystems of Care, a 501(c)3. Market Box deliveries take place twice a month, and each bag contains produce, meat, product sourcing list, a short newsletter with resources, and a copy of the South Side Weekly. To learn more, sign up for the waitlist, make a donation, or volunteer, visit www.MarketBoxChi.org.

Mutual Aid Groups

Chicago has a couple dozen known mutual aid groups mostly based in specific neighborhoods. Many mutual aid networks are not listed publicly as members are linked/informed and organize via whatsapp and other social apps.

Mayfair Mutual Aid
www.mayfairmutualaid.com

19th Ward Mutual Aid
<http://19aid.com>

Albany Park Mutual Aid
www.mayfairmutualaid.com

Avondale Mutual Aid
www.avondalemutualaid.org

Bronzeville-Kenwood Mutual Aid
<http://bkmachicago.com>

Edgewater Mutual Aid Network (EMAN)
<https://edgewatermutualaid.org>

Gage Park Latinx Council
<https://www.gplxc.org>

Humboldt Park Solidarity Network
www.instagram.com/hpsolidaritynetwork/

Irving Park Mutual Aid
www.facebook.com/groups/irvingparkmutualaid

Jefferson and Gladstone Parks Mutual Aid
www.facebook.com/groups/jeffmutualaid

PROFILE
Albany Park Mutual Aid:
Website: albanyparkmutualaid.com
312-854-9741
Email: apmutualaid@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/groups/1317900055267586
www.instagram.com/albanyparkmutualaid/

When was your group or organization founded and what inspired its creation?
Originally formed in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Within a few weeks of the initial shelter in place order, a small group of neighbors had created a website, a call-in number, a block-by-block canvassing plan, and a GoFundMe campaign that raised tens of thousands of dollars.

What is your mission?
Our mission is to build and maintain a network of neighbors dedicated to supporting all the people who call Albany Park home. We extend a hand to anyone in need, and let them know that they have support from their neighbors. We encourage every one of us to think about what community means, what it means to be in solidarity with neighbors of diverse backgrounds and identities.

What activities does your group or organization engage in?
Our core focus is making sure any individual in need can find us, make their voice heard, and get their basic needs met. We answer direct support requests placed through a phone line, email, social media, or word of mouth. We also raise funds and supplies with events like diaper drives.

What community or population is most helped by your group or organization?
We answer any call for support from anywhere in our diverse neighborhood. In recent history, our direct support primarily goes to families, especially those with newborns or young children.

What feedback have you received from the community you serve?
People are very happy that a group like this exists in their neighborhood. Some find it hard to believe at first that such a group can exist at all; they think we must be affiliated with some religion or political cause or the like. Our only cause is mutual aid, plain and simple. We exist to ensure everyone can meet their basic needs so that residents of Albany Park can feel supported in this vibrant community.

What are your thoughts on the relevance of Mutual Aid?
Mutual Aid as a concept offers a valuable lens on social organizing. There is no requirement for members or participants to align on political, religious or economic ideology. There are large structural issues discussed, and these are important, but the mutual aid lens focuses work on immediate and concrete actions that benefit real people in the here and now, while bringing those larger structural issues more and more into the light with each small action, and strengthening the bonds between people, which improves our ability to come together and better address those more complex structural issues.

PROFILE
Portage Park Mutual Aid
www.facebook.com/groups/1195127357553811

When was your group or organization founded and what inspired its creation?
Portage Park Mutual Aid began connecting neighbors in March 2020 as a direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The original team of PPMA volunteers were brought together through citywide organizing efforts led by Kelly Hayes and others. We were inspired by the then-emerging COVID-19 crisis to ensure that Portage Park neighbors had everything they needed to be well, including food and medical supplies, safe social connections, and financial assistance.

What is your mission?
Portage Park Mutual Aid connects northwest-side neighbors to advance community wellness.

What activities does your group or organization engage in?
Our primary focus for the past year has been helping people fill their basic needs with donated food and other essential items. We rely on donations from individuals and work with other mutual aid projects to pool resources. Every two weeks, Portage Park-based volunteers take food to 96 people in 39 households in the neighborhood.

What community or population is most helped by your group or organization?
PPMA focuses food distribution efforts across the northwest side, primarily in Portage Park, but also Jefferson Park, Dunning and Belmont-Cragin.

What feedback have you received from the community you serve?
Throughout our nearly three years of connective service, we have received immense gratitude from people in our community who are able to thrive thanks to the social connections and life-saving resources our community provides. We also often hear that neighbors wish there were more resources to go around, particularly cash assistance, and that there were more volunteers helping make connections and support our residents.

What major obstacles have you had to overcome?
Investment of time and energy has gradually waned over the past three years; the urgency and other unique circumstances of the height of the COVID-19 pandemic called people to action to help one another. Today, that energy seems to have been invested elsewhere. We continue to receive several requests for housing, utility and other types of financial assistance from people in the neighborhood each month. While we connect those folk to experts and services to help them out, we do not typically have resources to make direct cash donations to requestors.

How does your group or organization fit into the larger Mutual Aid movement?
PPMA is one of several northwest-side mutual aid networks that collaborates with the Chicago Food Sovereignty Coalition. Through CFSC, we are able to maintain our biweekly food distribution, conduct food rescue and distribution out of our warehouse space in Hermosa, and stay connected to other vital mutual aid movements in Chicago.

What are your thoughts on the relevance of Mutual Aid?
The concept of mutual aid encourages us to look to our human connections as the most vital source of security, safety and wellness. This life practice and message will be relevant as long as we keep investing in systems that prevent us from achieving equitable distribution of resources.

Lincoln Square Ravenswood Solidarity Network
www.lsrns.org

Logan Square Mutual Aid
www.logansquaremutualaid.org

McKinley Park Mutual Aid
www.facebook.com/McKinleyParkMutualAid/

Northwest Side Solidarity Network
www.northwestsidesolidarity.com

Portage Park Mutual Aid
www.facebook.com/groups/1195127357553811

Suburban Solidarity Network
www.facebook.com/SuburbanSolidarityNetwork

Ukrainian Village Mutual Aid
www.ukvmutualaid.com

West Town Mutual Aid
www.facebook.com/Westtownmutualaid

Wicker Park & Bucktown Mutual Aid
www.wickerparkmutualaid.org

Cooperative Housing: A Form of Mutual Aid?

BY ANNIE COLEMAN

There is an amazing statistic that Americans move on average 11 times in their life, while Europeans move on average 4 times. In this country, we live in a culture of shift and change as we strive to fully embody who we are and innovate with our individualistic voice. There is a lot to admire in that, however, even as we pursue our full potential as individuals, it is crucial to remember that we need community along the way. Having community is an important part of living a healthy and satisfied life. It creates a sense of belonging, builds social connections, and offers support and a safety net. A compelling way to create community is through co-housing or cooperative living.

Part of the American Dream is to grow up and seek independence, to stand on our own two feet and to make it in this world. For many people that vision of long term stability includes property ownership. It allows for both a fixed cost stability in monthly housing costs, long term financial investment, and the security of knowing that you are rooted in a place. That said, over the last several years we have watched housing prices increase, inventory get tighter, and therefore the opportunity to own property become increasingly more challenging. This is where it can be helpful to think outside of the box, consider your community, and reimagine what property ownership can look like. Enter cooperative housing.

The word “cooperative” means involving mutual assistance to reach a common goal.

Cooperative housing has been around as far back as records have been kept. It is when people pool resources to share property as a method to have affordable housing and other benefits of living in a community. These resources can be any combination of **financial, skill, or service** that make sense for what the members have to offer and mutually agree on. An example: if there are two people that want to buy a property together and one person has more financial resources than the second person, but the second person has more home improvement skills, each party can bring the resources they have in an equitable agreement to reach their goal of sustainable property ownership.

A cooperative can be as simple as a legal structure for building ownership and feel more like a condo. We see examples of this in many large buildings along Chicago’s lakefront. Or they can take the form of an intentional community where members develop the philosophy and structure that supports their common values and goals. I am addressing the latter form in this article.

A beautiful aspect of cooperative housing is it can take any form structurally and legally that the members choose and agree upon; at its core it is there to serve them. That said, it takes communication and compromise to reach mutual agreement and develop the foundational structure of the ownership arrangement.

The cooperative legal structure was developed during the 19th century in England. In this structure, a property is owned by a corporation and the members own shares in the corporation. Shares are tied to the part of the property the owner of the shares lives in/owns. When a member sells their unit, they are actually selling these shares rather than a deed to the property. This model allows for one entity to own the property and makes it easier for transfer of ownership. However, this legal model might not work in all situations. For smaller intentional communities with 2-4 households, it may make better legal sense to own the property in their names to be able to benefit from homeowners property tax exemptions and capital gains tax exemptions.

Some questions that members should ask themselves when considering the possibility of cooperative housing include:

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How many members is your cooperative going to have?

You can have as few as 2 households and up to as many as you want. The one thing to note is that with fewer members it is much easier to find common commitment and agreement. The bigger the organization the more it can serve, and the larger commitment it takes from the founding members. On average it takes 1-3 years to create a larger cooperative.

What are the founding principles?

This can be anything that the founding members want. Is it a commitment to affordable housing, having a large garden, intergenerational living, having creative studio space? This is important to identify as it’s one of the foundational blocks and will attract like-minded people.

How is the property ownership going to be set up?

Will everyone have their own units or will common living spaces be shared?

What is our yearly building budget?

It’s important to understand the numbers and get consensus with the founding members. There are models, resources, and consultants available to help with this.

Where is this property going to be?

Identifying where the property is going to be located is pivotal to move forward. I have witnessed numerous cooperatives identify this later in the process and realize they don’t have consensus and therefore didn’t move forward.

What level of work are we up for?

Renovating a property can be incredibly rewarding and also incredibly challenging. An advantageous part of housing inventory in Chicago is we have many multi-units. There are many multi-units in Chicago with deferred maintenance as landlords took the “band aid approach” to caring for properties. This presents an opportunity to create a place that particularly fits members’ needs. It does require full commitment and clear division of tasks.

How is conflict going to be resolved?

Conflict is inevitable in life and, while uncomfortable, is a key component in growth and metamorphosis. Having a conflict resolution model in place allows you to lean on it when the time arises. Employing your

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agreed-upon model brings you back to commonality and is the first step in bringing you to resolution.

It’s easy for the unlimited possibilities to feel overwhelming, and sometimes conflict can arise with members’ competing needs or desires. I have been told that nothing worth doing isn’t hard, and that’s certainly the case for cooperatives. Spending the time doing the work in the early stages of formation will pay off tenfold later on. The good news is that since the heyday of 1960s communes there have been resources created to guide your group to answer these questions, create a sustainable structure, and learn best practices.

So what are the first steps in creating an intentional cooperative community? The key in starting any great endeavor off on the right foot is to find experts and resources to help you build the foundation. The North American Students of Cooperation (NASCO) is a national organization based in Chicago that provides education and guidance to cooperatives. This organization is particularly good for larger cooperatives, but even a 2-household intentional community can benefit from the resources they have compiled. Another first step is researching cooperative communities around the US (and world) and talking to a representative to

discuss their structure, what they learned, etc. It’s also important to talk to a lender and a realtor experienced in cooperative housing to understand your financing options and discuss the market.

While cooperative housing can pose some challenges, let’s go back to why it’s an empowering and rewarding model of living. Cooperative housing can provide affordable housing and mutual aid. It also provides community. You can share a garden, meals, groceries, child care, transportation, a woodshop, a bike repair, a music room... the sky’s the limit in building the life and community you want to be a part of. In the end, you accomplish the goal of owning property, and have a built-in community of like minded people.

If the idea of this sounds romantic, full of potential and exciting, it is. ♦

Annie Coleman is Founder and Managing Broker of LivingRoom Realty. LivingRoom Realty offers a Co-Housing class at their West Town office. If you have any questions or want to start a housing cooperative contact annie@livingroomrealty.com, or visit their website at livingroomrealty.com for upcoming classes and events.

THE MUTUAL AID ISSUE



I AM AN ALLY



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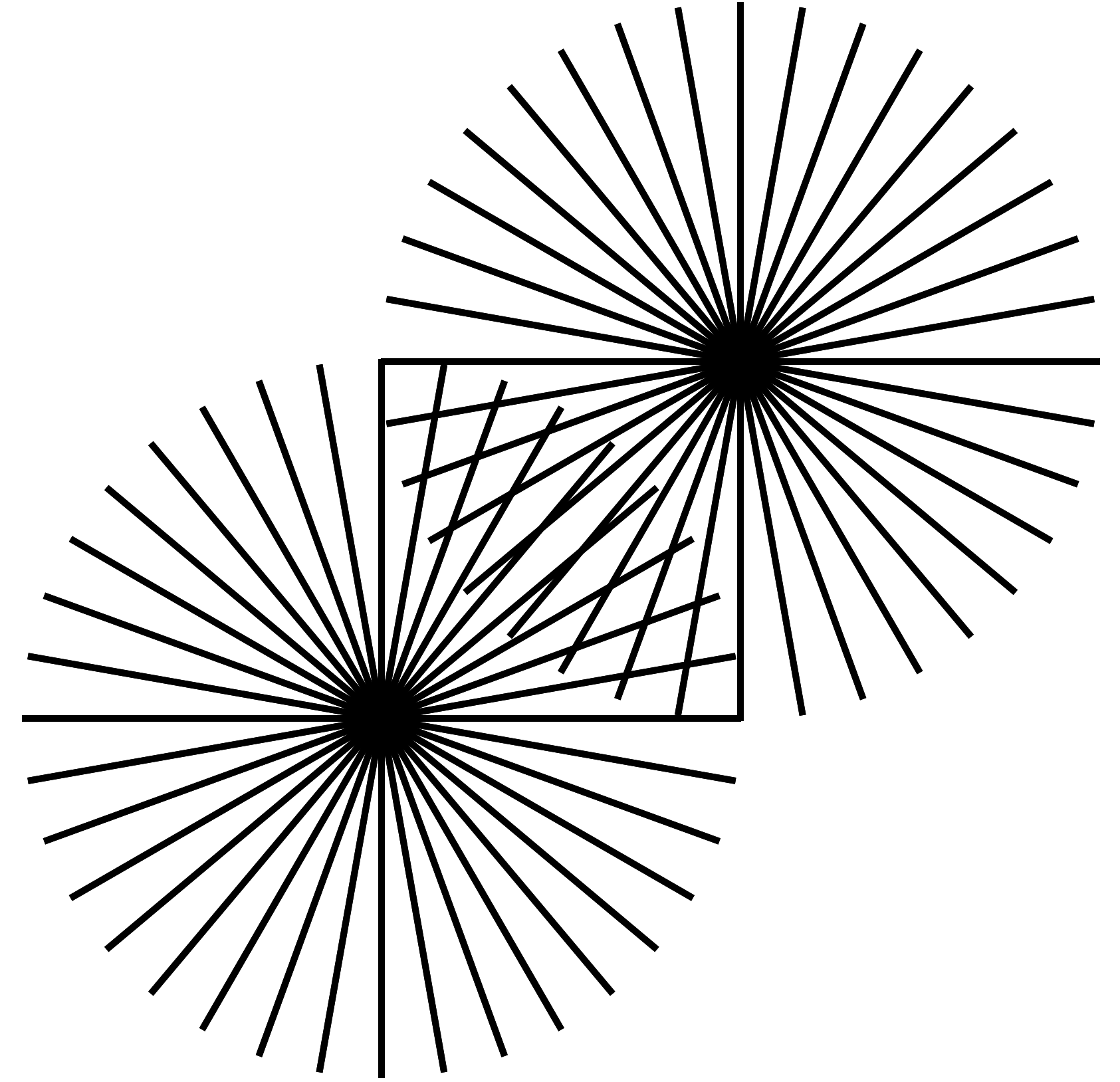
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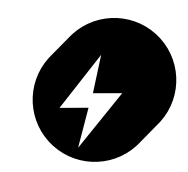
Chicago

*ON
AIR*

RADIO



Music, Community,
News, Art, Culture



*WLPN
LP*

lumpenradio.com



Lumpen Radio

MONDAYS

Vapor Radio

Monday-Thursday / 6-7AM

Let the vapor embrace you. New moods. New attitudes. New music.

The Jams

Mondays and Friday / 7-8AM

Classic, Old School and more... these are the JAMS!

News, Weather and Traffic with Jamie Trecker

Mon-Friday / 7:40AM

Your weekday update to help you start the day.

Democracy Now

Monday-Friday / 8-9AM

Daily national news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan González.

Hitting Left with the Klonsky Brothers

Monday / 9-10AM

Hitting Left takes on issues of education, politics and social justice. We're joined in-studio each Friday from 11 to noon, by an interesting and provocative assortment of fellow activists, poets, musicians, journalists... or any friends who happen to pop in. Rebroadcast.

This is Hell! with host Chuck Mertz

Mondays / 10-11AM

This is Hell! is a weekly longform political interview program broadcast in Chicago since 1996. Rebroadcast.

Labor Express Radio with Jerry Mead-Lucero

First, Third and Fourth Mondays / 11AM-Noon
Rebroadcast of Labor Express Radio.

Midday Mix Vibes

Mondays / Noon-2PM

Hyper-curated mix sessions from local and international DJ talent.

Trqpiteca FM with La Spacer and Cqqchifruit

First and Third Mondays from 4-6pm

TRQPITECA FM is a radio show hosted by TRQPITECA co-founders and resident DJs, La Spacer & Cqqchifruit. We're talking all things dance music and art, with DJ sets, interviews, performances, and more from us and our special guests. Tune in to catch the Rush Hour Rave, where we'll be turning your Mondays up with our favorite new underground dance music and classic party tunes from Chicago and around the world!

The Isms Show with Betty Heredia

Second and Fourth Mondays / 4-6PM

Transmitting ideas via a curated collection of songs from the past, present, and future. mixcloud.com/BHerelsms

Planet CatieO with Catie Olson

Fifth Mondays / 4-6PM

Planet CatieO is always an exciting adventure to other places in our galaxy. DJ catieo is a free form DJ & spins a wide range of eclectic of tunes including Anatolian psychedelic rock, disco, French Boogie, space rock, electronic, minimal wave, and soul. She has hosted a variety of musicians on her show from Jazz, rock n' roll to Gypsy. DJ catieo hopes to share unexpected music and always includes a bit of whimsy. www.catieolson.com/

Out of Vogue with Kisston

First and Third Mondays / 6-8PM

Playing a different version of punk rock each and every week. Sometimes poppier, sometimes more hardcore-ish! 8tracks.com/kisston
lumpenradio.com/outofvogue.html

The Ponderers with Sandra Trevino & Stephanie Manriquez

Second and Fourth Mondays / 6-8PM

The Ponderers feature global tracks, with a focus on Latin America, spinning an eclectic and dance-friendly medley of womxn-fronted

sounds, in both digital and vinyl formats. The show includes musical guests, empowering interviews with womxn doing extraordinary things in arts and culture, and the freshest cuts in Latin alternative music. Hosted by Stephanie Manriquez (#FanitaBanana) and Sandra Treviño (#DJAngelfuk), members of Future Rootz.

Post Modern Talking with Bobby Conn and DJ LeDeuce

Mondays / 8-10PM

The end times are here - come celebrate the funeral of Western Civilization with fond musical memories selected by hosts Bobby Conn and DJ LeDeuce. It's hopeless - but it doesn't have to sound that way. Exactly the same playlist as MeTV FM but with lots of Suicide, J Dilla, Strangulated Beatoffs and Throbbing Gristle mixed in. Plus regular guest appearances by Reuben Kincaid, Bill Mummy, Stevie Wayne and Lil' MQCL77MQXL!

Release the Hounds with Lidia Vomito and Bryan Chump Change

First and Third Mondays / 10PM-Midnight

Release The Hounds brings you Lidia Vomito spinning Metal and Hard Rock on vinyl for the first hour and Punk, Hardcore, etc. the second hour from cohort, Bryan Chump Change. Release The Hounds airs every first and third Monday of the month from 10 pm to Midnight. Tune in and howl out... Awooooo!

Dusty Sparkles' Spectacular Soundhouse

Second and Fourth Mondays / 10PM-11PM

Enter the Soundhouse, a sanctuary for the misfits, the outsiders, and the seekers of musical transcendence. From the depths of krautrock's hypnotic embrace to the outer reaches of heavy psych's trippy transcendence, this show is an expedition into the untamed territories of sound. Dusty Sparkles fearlessly unearths hidden treasures from every corner of the globe, unveiling the world's best-kept secrets in heavy rock, where obscure sonic explorations bloom into sonic revolutions.

Screams of Combat with El Cardenal de Aztlán

Second & Fourth Mondays / 11PM-12PM

SCREAMS OF COMBAT is a bilingual radio show in which the midnight chronicles by El Cardenal de Aztlán explore the intersection of sports and modern mythology incorporating music, journalism, poetry and performance art. GRITOS DE COMBATE is inspired by the XXth Century Mexican avant-garde art movement known as "movimiento estridentista."

TUESDAYS

Vapor Radio

Monday-Thursday / 6-7AM

Let the vapor embrace you. New moods. New attitudes. New music.

Mashed Potato Time with Karin Fjellman

Tuesdays / 7-8AM

Kick back with the grooviest tunes from the 50s and 60s. Perfect to make breakfast to!

News, Weather and Traffic with Jamie Trecker

Monday-Friday / 7:40AM

Your weekday update to help you start the day.

Democracy Now

Monday-Friday / 8-9AM

Daily national news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan González.

Groove 5 with Neil Gainer

Tuesdays / 9AM

Groove 5 is a musical experience that puts the groove first, always pocket, and always going. In a world void of compassion and care, Groove 5 will make you feel some kind of way.

News From The Service Entrance with host Mario Smith

Tuesdays / 10-11AM

Hour-long rebroadcast of News From The Service Entrance.

Contratiempo Radio

Tuesdays / 11am-12PM

Contratiempo radio is a cultural program that showcases Latin American and immigrant art and thought in the United States, and Chicago in particular. Functioning as an extension of and a complement to Contratiempo magazine, the program creates a conversational space featuring poetry, music, art, cinema, literature, politics, immigrant stories and much more. contratiempo.org.
Rebroadcast of Contratiempo Radio.

Midday Mix Vibes

Tuesdays / Noon-2PM

Hyper-curated mix sessions from local and international DJ talent.

Lumpen Radio Specials

Tuesdays / 2-3 PM

One hour of conversations, panel discussions and other special coverages from local events.

Mutual Aid Report with hosts Stephanie Manriquez and Mario Smith

Second and Fourth Tuesdays from 2-3PM (Seasonal)

The Mutual Aid Report is a radio and live stream series that delves into the concept of mutual aid. Our hosts, Stephanie Manriquez and Mario Smith, will unpack its historical significance and its role in local communities by spotlighting individuals who are making a real difference at the grassroots level in the city of Chicago. Our goal is to elevate the profile of mutual aid, shed light on these community-based initiatives, and motivate others to either join or back existing ventures.

Tete a Tete (in Cantonese)

Tuesdays / 3-4PM

Rebroadcast of Tete a Tete

Chicago Current Events

Tuesdays / 4-6PM

A potpourri of the best and freshest programs and interviews from Lumpen Radio.

bel_Air presents with Todd Carter

Tuesdays / 6-8PM

Music from Chicago, the Milky Way Galaxy, and beyond A variety of studio and live musical tracks with special guests.

SONORAMA with Charly Garcia, Edgar Baca & Marlowe Baca

First and Third Tuesdays / 8-10PM

A real sonic treat traveling back through Latin America during the 50's, 60's, 70's. With some contemporary surprises along the way. Our language is the music from those Vintage Latin Sounds past and present. mixcloud.com/sonoramachicago
sonoramachicago.com

Q.C. with King Hippo

Second and Fourth Tuesdays from 8-10PM

Q.C. is for listeners who are interested in how soul, jazz, r&b, funk, and hip-hop are shaping new underground music from around the world. Listeners will also enjoy interviews, guest-mixes, and in-studio performances by potent new artists.

Buen Viaje Radio with Buen Viaje DJs Dain & Andres

First and Third Tuesdays from 10PM-midnight

Buen Viaje Radio is an extension of our live performances where we get a chance to explore new sounds and host guests that inspire us. Our record selection aims to celebrate the essence of dance music roots to create a timeless sound. You can expect sounds ranging from expressive feel-good house, to expansive jazz-infused rhythms, to deep hypnotic zones.

Slice off Pie with Pie (Henk Bakker)

Second and Fourth Tuesdays

Sounds, music, musicals mixed with interviews, collages, life synths and the occasional bit of cheese all lightly thematically linked.

WEDNESDAYS

Vapor Radio

Monday-Thursday / 6-7AM

Let the vapor embrace you. New moods. New attitudes. New music.

Global HiFi

Wednesdays / 7-8AM

The Global Get Down!

News, Weather and Traffic with Jamie Trecker

Mon-Friday / 7:40AM

Your weekday update to help you start the day.

Democracy Now

Mon-Friday / 8-9AM

Daily national news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan González.

Lumpen Week in Review

Wednesdays / 9-10AM

Rebroadcast of Lumpen Week in Review.

Perceptions of the Real with host Sarah Conway and Eli Ramirez

Wednesday / 10-11AM

Rebroadcast of Perceptions of the Real

Bad at Sports Center with hosts Dana Bassett, Ryan Peter Miller, Brian Andrews, Jesse Malmed and Duncan MacKenzie

Wednesdays / 11AM-Noon

Contemporary art talk without the ego. The Midwest's largest independent contemporary art talk show.
facebook.com/badatsports

Midday Mix Vibes

Wednesdays / Noon-2PM

Hyper-curated mix sessions from local and international DJ talent.

Wattz Up! and La Mesita with Yollocalli Youth

Wednesdays / 2-4PM

Rebroadcast of Wattz Up!

Country, My Way with Lawrence Peters

Wednesdays / 4-6PM

Underplayed classics, and small-label gems, spanning all eras of honky tonk, bluegrass, outlaw, western swing, country soul/funk, Ameripolitan. Stubbornly curated by Chicago's country-est mofo: singer & songwriter Lawrence Peters.
lawrencepeters.com
mixcloud.com/lumpenradio/playlists/country-my-way

Guillermo Gómez-Peña's Mex Files: Audio Art & Strange Poetry from the US/Mexico Border

First and Third Wednesdays from 6-7PM

The series Gómez-Peña's Mex Files: Audio Art and Strange Poetry from the US/Mexico Border are a multi-lingual live radio and archived audio program by performance artist, writer, activist, and MacArthur fellow Guillermo Gómez-Peña addressing the multiple pandemics of racism, sexism, militarism, and colonialism..

Chicago Printers Guild with hosts Dud Lawson and Manny

Second and Fourth Wednesdays from 6-7PM

Chicago Printers Guild presents Halftone Radio Supershow. Join your pals Dud Lawson and Manny of the Chicago Printers Guild & your favorite printmakers from across the city to chat inky paper and play funky jams!
www.chicagoprintersguild.org

Communities Amplified (in Spanish)

Wednesdays from 7-8PM

Communities Amplified presents original Spanish content as part of the expanded multilingual programming on the WLPN airwaves each week. Some of our special segments and programs are: Entre sonidos y almas, Adentro de la voz hay un poema, Neta con Rebeca Fernandez y De inmigrante a inmigrante.

The Butter Hours with Scott & Eric

First and Third Wednesdays from 8-10PM

The butter boys hit the airwaves every 1st & 3rd Tuesday of every month as they play their favorite underground electronic and dance music as well as deep cuts from all genres.

InbetweenRadio/Stations with Glenn Russell

Wednesdays / 10PM-Midnight

Chicago's only show for and about DJs, vinyl collecting, and Sound Disbursement. Host DJs Glenn Russell and DJ Mykol discuss and play hidden gems of all musical types from all decades. They share tracks from recent vinyl finds and favorite tracks from their DJ events. Each show features a musical theme and/or musical guest!
Distributing the sounds you'll only hear InBetweenRadio/Stations.

Spirit World Radio with DJ Heaven

First and Third Wednesdays from 10PM-Midnight

Spirit World is a genre-fluid curation of otherworldly and dreamy music. Sounds that are designed to transport you to another world - a spiritual, ethereal and psychedelic world that we cannot see, but feel. A world that is happening around us all of the time and all we have to do is listen.

THURSDAYS

Vapor Radio

Monday-Thursday / 6-7AM

Let the vapor embrace you. New moods. New attitudes. New music.

Good Morning Mix

Thursdays / 7-8AM

Tunes to get you to work and back! LOL

News, Weather and Traffic with Jamie Trecker

Monday-Friday / 7:40AM

Your weekday update to help you start the day.

Democracy Now

Mon-Friday / 8-9AM

Daily national news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan González.

Pocket Guide to Hell with Paul Durica and Elliot Heilman

First and Third Thursday / 9-10AM

Pocket Guide to Hell explores the intersections of art, politics, and culture as illuminated by Chicago's past. Along the way, hosts Paul Durica and Elliot Heilman talk with fine folks doing the work of keeping the past present and show you the places where the city's history resides today.

This is Hell! with host Chuck Mertz

Thursdays / 10-11AM

A brand-new episode of This is Hell! This is Hell is a weekly longform political interview program broadcast in Chicago since 1996.

Eye 94 with hosts Jamie Trecker, Jeremy Kitchen and Mike Sack

Thursdays and Sundays / 11AM-Noon

Dubravka Ugresic called them the "Three Musketeers of Literature." Eye 94 is Lumpen Radio's books and literature show, covering reading worldwide. Interviews with authors, publishers and creators from contemporary literature and beyond. With readings by Shanna van Volt and music from some of Chicago's finest artists. More information and archives at eye94.org

Mashed Potato Time with DJ Karin

Thursdays / Noon-2PM

Mashed Potato Time is all about the glory days of the recording culture that left us with stacks and stacks of forgotten 45s. Karin dusts off her favorite '50s & '60s singles for an all-vinyl show filled with carefree soul grooves, early R&B movers, dance crazes that never were, scuzzy garage gems, and much more!
mixcloud.com/karin-fjellman

News From The Service Entrance with Mario Smith

Thursdays / 2-4PM

Music, interviews and people from all walks of life. Famous and infamous. Radio with a purpose. Mario is joined most weeks by Michilla Blaise and producer Jamie Trecker.

Skerd To Dance with Jimmy Kaps

First and Third Thursdays / 4-6PM

Skerd To Dance is mixed live by Jimmy Kaps, featuring special guest local DJs and producers who take over the FM airwaves with vinyl/digital DJ sets and/or live gear performances.
mixcloud.com/skerdtodance

Idiot Business with Mike Esposito

Second Thursdays from 5-6PM

Idiot Business is primarily an experimental electronic music show, although hip hop, rock, and comedy do slip in sometimes. The music is sometimes mixed together, sometimes collaged, and sometimes played one track at a time. For Idiot Business, experimental electronic music includes IDM, techno, jungle, electro-acoustic music, noise, and electronic pop, for starters. The goal is simply to provide good experimental electronic music irrespective of (sub-)genre.

The Mutant Hit Parade with Lawrence Peters

Fourth Thursdays / 4-6PM

The Mutant Hit Parade is a selection of classic power-pop and rock that would have been big hits had only anyone given it a chance. Lawrence Peters does.

Attention Deficit Radio with Sergio Rodriguez

First and Third Thursdays / 6-8PM

Bringing you an eclectic mix of jams not bound to one genre. ADR host Sergio brings you gems (old and new) from the worlds of indie rock, soul, jazz, hip-hop, world. ADR comes to you every 1st and 3rd Thursday's from 6pm-8pm. Tune in and you might discover a new favorite artist.

Bi-Lengua Radio with Osvaldo Cuevas

Second Thursdays from 6-8 PM

Bi-Lengua radio bridges the gap of the Americas with themed episodes that explore the collision of culture. Expect an eclectic tour of music and conversation in English and Spanish.
bilengua.org

Beer Temple Insiders Roundtable with Chris Quinn

First, Third and Fifth Thursdays from 8-10PM

Chris Quinn, owner of the Beer Temple, sits down with craft beer insiders to discuss the topics that matter most to them. Each week features different guests sharing their insights and giving you an insider's view of the evolving craft beer scene.

CHANDO RADIO with the Chandeliers

Thursdays / 10PM-12AM

Presenting the best in modern electronica, Chando Radio combines underground and rare electronic, experimental, and progressive dance music hand picked by Chicago synth ensemble Chandeliers (Lisa Armstrong, Harry Brenner, Chris Kalis, Scott McGaughey) and special guests.

FRIDAYS

Vapor Radio

Fridays / 6-7 AM

Let the vapor embrace you. New moods. New attitudes. New music.

The Jams!

Fridays 7-8 AM

Classic, Old School and more...these are the JAMS!

News, Weather and Traffic with Jamie Trecker

Monday-Friday / 7:40AM

Your weekday update to help you start the day.

Democracy Now

Monday-Friday / 8-9AM

Daily national news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan González.

Soothing Sounds by UNCanned Music

Second Fridays / 9-10AM

Soothing Sounds is curated by the fine folks at UNCANNEdmusic. This series aims to present calming tones for our stressed-out times. UNCANNEd curates extra-ordinary sound experiences for the hospitality industry, creating unique designs to enhance any situation through music. Lumpen Radio and UNCANNEd hope that this special programming helps you find your center.. Kick back, relax and chill with music curated by Joe Darling and UNCanned.

Pocket Guide to Hell with Paul Durica and Elliot Heilman

Fridays 10-11PM

Rebroadcast of Pocket Guide to Hell.

Hitting Left with The Klonsky Brothers

Fridays / 11AM-12PM

Hitting Left takes on issues of education, politics and social justice. We're joined in-studio each Friday from 11 to noon, by an interesting and provocative assortment of fellow activists, poets, musicians, journalists... or any friends who happen to pop in.

Lumpen Radio Specials

Fridays / 12-1PM

One hour of conversations, panel discussions and other special coverages from local events

News From The Service Entrance with host Mario Smith

First and Third Fridays / 1-2PM

Hour-long rebroadcast of News From The Service Entrance.

Sala with host Silvia Inés González

Fridays from 2-3PM

Rebroadcast of Sala

Staff Pick of the week

Fridays from 3-4PM

Rebroadcast of a show chosen by one of our staff members

Gridlock Sound Lab with Saddle Woods

First and Third Fridays from 4-6PM

Sadie Woods brings you rush hour radio featuring House, Afro Latin Rhythms, Worldbeat, Disco, Funk, Soul, Electro, and Indie Dance music.

Lumpen Week in Review

Fridays / 6-7PM

Lumpen Week in Review is the show that covers the past week of news, happenings and programs presented on Lumpen Radio. Each week we present a sampling of news, programs and interviews with guests that were presented on Lumpen Radio.

Weird Lady Music by Jodie Baltazar

Fridays from 7-8PM
Host Baltazark (Jodie Baltazar) brings you WEIRD MUSIC made by ladies and music made by WEIRD LADIES spanning genres, geographies, and generations. This show is about finding and celebrating the curious ways in which women confront social or artistic banality with sonic self-expression.

Star Creature Vibes Radio with Tim Zawada

Fridays / 8-10PM
Star Creature Vibes Radio is a penetrative exploration into the alternative world of Disco. The show begs to answer one of the defining questions of the last 1000 years: “What is Boogie?” Host Tim Zawada alongside notable guests from across the globe, play an assortment of underrepresented and left leaning with a large focus on the later 70s to early 80s Boogie Phenomenon with a healthy dose of contemporary Boogie Styles, House and Spaced Out Modern Funk.
<http://starcreatureuniversalsvibrations.com>

Hello Weekend!!

Fridays from 7-8PM
Start your weekend with danceable selections from the Lumpen Radio cool cats.

SATURDAYS

Soothing Sounds by UNCanned Music

Saturdays / 6-7AM
Soothing Sounds is curated by the fine folks at UNCANNEDmusic. This series aims to present calming tones for our stressed-out times. UNCANNED curates extra-ordinary sound experiences for the hospitality industry, creating unique designs to enhance any situation through music. Lumpen Radio and UNCANNED hope that this special programming helps you find your center.. Kick back, relax and chill with music curated by Joe Darling and UNCanned.

This is Hell! with host Chuck Mertz

Saturdays / 7-8AM
Rebroadcast of This is Hell!

Lumpen Week in Review

Saturdays 8-9AM
Rebroadcast of Lumpen Week In Review.

Saturdays morning talks

Saturdays 9-10AM
The best of our Lumpen Radio talk shows and special programs

Bad at Sports Center

Saturdays from 10-11AM
Rebroadcast of Bad at Sports Center.

Perceptions of the Real with host Sarah Conway and Eli Ramirez

Second and Fourth Saturdays from 11-12PM
Perceptions of the Real is an exploration of what swims beneath our consciousness and how it surfaces through writing. Every 2nd and 4th Saturday @ 11AM, hosts Sarah Conway and Eli Ramirez are joined by a guest who produces a piece of writing live on-air. Together we will detangle the question of why we make what we make.

Wattz Up! and La Mesita with Yollocalli Youth

Saturdays from 12-2PM
Wattz Up! is a youth produced and hosted variety talk show that reflects their culture and their communities. After Wattz Up! listeners can enjoy the sweet sounds of La Mesita, bringing independent and upcoming musicians to Yollocalli Studio Y, for a concert live performance and interview. Broadcasting live from Studio Y in the heart of Little Village, youth ages 13 to 24 take over the airwaves with unique stories, cool jams, and lots of lolz.
<https://soundcloud.com/yollocalli>

Sala with host Silvia Inés González

First and Third Saturdays from 2-3PM
Sala: A living room of ideas. Sala invites artists, cultural workers, and civically minded people to discuss liberation, education, organizing, community, and practices toward healing, from the perspective of Artists' and their artistic process.

Staff Pick of the week

Fridays from 3-4PM
Rebroadcast of a show chosen by one of our staff members

News From The Service Entrance with host Mario Smith

Saturdays from 4-5PM
Hour-long rebroadcast of News From The Service Entrance.

The Minimal Beat with Bill Ocean & Caitlin Mahoney

Saturdays 5-7PM
The Minimal Beat is Chicago-based music blog. We blog about relevant artists of the day, with no particular genre-specific focus. In addition, The Minimal Beat hosts a weekly radio show on 105.5 WLPN-LP 'Lumpen Radio' every Saturday from 5-7PM CDT. We also release music on the private press label TMB Limited. If you would like more information or want to get involved with The Minimal Beat, please write to us. theminimalbeat.com

Lumpen Week in Review

Saturdays from 7-8PM
Lumpen Week in Review is the show that covers the past week of news, happenings and programs presented on Lumpen Radio. Each week we present a sampling of news, programs and interviews with guests that were featured on the station.

EurekaCast NOW! With Kai Hubris and Rowan Meadowlark

Saturdays from 8-9PM
ECN! is a New Media collaboration between Tech Brothers New Media Labs and the Simon Amy Institute of Spirit Science. Each week, join Media Disruption Developer Kai Hubris and Professor Rowan Meadowlark as they bring you the latest breakthroughs in science and technology.
www.awcyfm.com/eurekacast/
INSPIRE CURIOSITY, IMAGINE SCIENCE!

Lumpen Radio Twitch Live

9PM-12AM
Live DJ sets from Life on Marz Community Club

CHANDO Radio with the Chandeliers

Saturdays from 10PM-Midnight
Presenting the best in modern electronica, Chando Radio combines underground and rare electronic, experimental, and progressive dance music hand picked by Chicago synth ensemble Chandeliers (Lisa Armstrong, Harry Brenner, Chris Kalis, Scott McGaughey) and special guests.

SUNDAYS

Soothing Sounds by UNCanned Music

Sundays from 6-7AM
Soothing Sounds is curated by the fine folks at UNCANNEDmusic. This series aims to present calming tones for our stressed-out times. UNCANNED curates extra-ordinary sound experiences for the hospitality industry, creating unique designs to enhance any situation through music. Lumpen Radio and UNCANNED hope that this special programming helps you find your center.. Kick back, relax and chill with music curated by Joe Darling and UNCanned.

Lumpen Week in Review

Sundays from 7-8AM
Rebroadcast of Lumpen Week In Review.

Contratiempo Radio with Stephanie Manriquez and Contratiempo's Contributors

Sundays / 9-10AM
Rebraodcast of Contratiempo radio

This is Hell! with host Chuck Mertz

Sundays / 10-11 AM
A brand-new episode of This is Hell! This is Hell is a weekly longform political interview program broadcast in Chicago since 1996.
soundcloud.com/this-is-hell

Eye 94 with hosts Jamie Trecker, Jeremy Kitchen and Mike Sack

Sundays 11AM-12PM
Rebriadcast of Eye 94 is

Radio Muévelo with host La Janesita and Violeta Vara

First Sundays from 12-2 PM
Radio Muévelo is a bilingual show carefully curated to showcase the most exciting and cutting-edge music from Latin American artists on the rise. Join us monthly as we take you on a captivating journey through the vibrant world of emerging Latin American music and the stories of the people behind it, exploring genres like Electronic, R&B, Indie, Juke, House, Afrobeats, Club Latino and more.
<https://juke.mx/category/radio/radio-muevelo>

The Eastern Block/Wschodni Blok with Andrea Jablonski

Second Sundays / 12-2PM
Music of all genres from Poland (and other Eastern Block countries.)

Sunday Record Club with Kevin Hsia

Third Sundays 12-2PM
Sunday Record Club is a show about records—the music, and the collectors and DJs playing them. Special guests join in-studio to dig deep, sharing their most beloved records. No frills and no fillers, SRC is just about playing great records on a Sunday.
mixcloud.com/lumpenradio/playlists/sunday-record

Foreign Accents with Maria Tz & Josh Fox

Fourth Sundays / 12-2PM
Dedicated to the pure enjoyment of home listening. The show aims to juxtapose various genres together from different parts of the world, both past and present.
mixcloud.com/lumpenradio/playlists/foreign-accents

Pocket Guide to Hell with Paul Durica and Elliot Heilman

Sundays 2-3PM
Rebroadcast of Pocket Guide to Hell

Tete a Tete (in Cantonese)

Sundays 3-4PM
A Cantonese talk show hosted by Anita Luk, covering news and current affairs from Chicago and beyond.

Divisive with Leah Gipson and Craig Harshaw

First and Third Sundays 4-5PM
DIVISIVE explores the intersections and interactivity between politics and cultural work. It's divisive.

Who Gives a S••t? with Host Matt Muchowski

Second and Fourth Sundays 4-5PM
Is it a commentary of the Sisyphean task of life as exemplified by the internet emoji “_()_/” or a question we answer every show with guests such as heavy metal musicians, elected officials, union activists, comic book creators, and other oddballs? Who gives a shit? Either way WGAS is a rollicking 2 hours of surrealist fun, deep conversations. and musical mayhem!

Paid Time Off with Andrew Joseph and Laura Caringella

First and Third Sundays / 5-7PM
The crew behind Chicago-based dance music label Leisure Records doesn't slack off when it comes to leisure time. Ease out of the weekend with smooth grooves and chilled out floor fillers courtesy of the Paid Time Off DJs. Sleazy yet sophisticated, like a party in your cool uncle's rec room. It's the real deal — keep it locked, y'all.
mixcloud.com/paidtimeoff

This is Hell! with host Chuck Mertz

Sundays 7-8PM
Rebroadcast of This is Hell!

Labor Express Radio with Jerry Mead-Lucero

Sundays / 8-9PM
For almost 25 years, Labor Express Radio has been the only English language labor news and current affairs radio program in Chicago... “News for working people, by working people.” The program covers issues in the labor movement locally, nationally, and internationally. The program also addresses issues of concern to working people such as housing, education, health care, immigrants rights, the environment and U.S. foreign policy, from a working class viewpoint. Labor Express Radio is a member of the Committee for Labor Access, a non-profit entity which is also responsible for the production of the Labor Beat TV program on cable access television in Chicago.
<https://www.laborexpress.org>

Lumpen Week in Review

Sundays 9-10PM
Rebroadcast of Lumpen Week In Review.

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& MODERN ART

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