

# Speakers to discuss fair housing

By AUDREY L. WILLIAMS  
Chronicle Staff Writer

In September 1982, Winston-Salem passed its own fair housing ordinance. A year later, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development endorsed a similar resolution and made Fair Housing Week in the Twin City official on the federal level.

Beginning Sunday, various religious services will be devoted to the plight of fair housing in Winston-Salem, and Monday, Mayor Wayne Corpening will proclaim Fair Housing Week in the opening ceremony at 12:15 p.m. in Winston Square.

This year's theme, "Open Neighborhoods Make Happy People: Housing, It's the Law of the Land," is aimed at getting input from residents and various agencies and specialists, who will lead group discussions and workshops on fair housing, said Pat Gruening, human relations specialist with the city's Human Relations Department.

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-- Pat Gruening

problems," said Gruening. "We want to come up with solid goals and recommendations that in turn will be sent to the Fair Housing Committee for study, then on to the Human Relations Commission, who will take the recommendations to the Board of Aldermen."

"In our workshop session on Tuesday," she said, "we will ask the questions, 'What is decent housing? Who is responsible, the landlords or the tenants, and what can be done to improve the present situation?'"

The decent housing workshop is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the Main Library on West Fifth Street. Gruening said that neighborhood associations, and especially persons living in low-income and dilapidated housing, are urged to attend the various workshops and group discussions that will highlight Fair Housing Week.

Some of the workshop and group discussion leaders will include Earl Brown, Experiment in Self-Reliance Inc. housing specialist; Marianne Steintrager, president of the Interfaith Housing

Alliance; Luellen Curry, Legal Aid attorney; Bill McNeil, city planner; Fannie Andrews, fair housing specialist in the Greensboro HUD office, and Marilyn Baldwin, program director for CONTACT.

Gruening also said that various city officials, such as City Manager Bill Stewart, Assistant City Manager Al Beatty, Winston-Salem Urban League President Thomas Elijah, and ESR Executive Director Louise Wilson and many others will be present on the kick-off day.

"With all these people taking part in Fair Housing Week, it's a sure sign that we're all working for the same thing -- improving housing," said Gruening.

As a recent guest speaker at at First Baptist Church on Highland Avenue to promote the event and encourage the church's members to take part in the week-long activities, Gruening emphasized the religious aspect of Fair Housing Week.

"We're really hoping the churches will get involved in Fair Housing Week," she said, "because the whole housing issue is not just a political issue, but a religious one as well."


"This is a very Christian community," said Gruening, "and we all share the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and we should care about those who live in dilapidated housing or are being discriminated against because they want to live better."

On Wednesday, Ernest Fulton, area HUD director of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, will meet with the Watkins Street Neighborhood Association and tour homes that have been painted and repaired with assistance from the Interfaith Alliance and through funds donated by United Way. Fulton will also speak at the opening ceremony on Monday.


Winners of the Fair Housing Week poster contest will also be announced Thursday immediately following Nell Britton of Nell Lite Productions' skit on fair housing at 7:30 p.m. at Winston Square. First-, second- and third-place winners will receive \$75, \$50 and \$25 cash prizes respectively.

"It's important that the community be as actively involved in Fair Housing Week as possible," said Gruening. "With people openly discussing and protesting the housing problems in Winston-Salem, action can take place."

For more information on the week-long activities, contact Gruening at the Human Relations Department at 727-2429.



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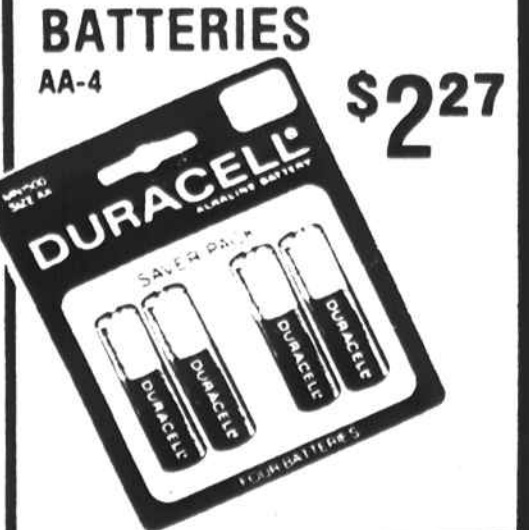
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