

# Agencies help elderly deal with heat wave

By VALERIE ROBACK GREGG  
Chronicle Staff Writer

Crops are dying out west, cattle are being slaughtered, the mercury is hitting record-breaking temperatures in cities around the nation, and Winston-Salem is not immune—especially the elderly population.

Area residents, like 65-year-old Ethel R. Veringo, who live alone and suffer from respiratory and heart problems must be especially careful. If Veringo hadn't received an air conditioner courtesy of the Crisis Control Ministry recently, the heat could have cost her life.

Veringo's chronic breathing problems, high blood pressure, and heart problems require a constant temperature of 68 degrees. The numerous medications she must take make it extremely dangerous for her body temperature to get too high. She can't work because of heart problems and is confined to a wheelchair because a bone in her leg is deteriorating.

And her \$293-a-month Social Security check would not begin to pay for the cost of an air conditioner. "It doesn't go far when you have two \$48 prescriptions to get," she said.

Veringo is only one of the county's needy, elderly and disabled

who need heat relief and cannot pay for it.

Prolonged periods of heat can aggravate a variety of medical problems, especially for the elderly. Dr. Lynn M. Hale, the medical director of the Forsyth County Public Health Clinic, said that elderly people with respiratory ailments are often the hardest hit. "The elderly exposed to high temperatures and humidity for over two or three days often develop a subtle and progressive dehydration," Hale said. "They may not develop thirst. They are often on medications, like diuretics, for high blood pressure and heart problems, which increase the chance of heat stroke. They increase heat production."

If the body is not cooled, the heart is also stressed, she said. Such stress can lead to heart attacks and in extreme cases, heart failure. "The remedy is to stay cool and to continue to drink water, thirsty or not," Hale said. "With the elderly it may develop so slowly, they don't know it until it's too late. Prevention is the real thing."

And here's where Crisis Control and the Forsyth County Department of Social Services come in. Crisis Control distributes 20-inch fans, which cost between \$18 and \$20, to those without medical prob-

lems who can prove a genuine financial need.

Crisis Control Ministry is now distributing air conditioners and fans to low-income individuals and families. Crisis Control has distributed 30 air conditioners and 93 fans so far this summer, more than twice the number distributed last summer, James T. Fatzinger, associate director of Crisis Control Ministry, said Tuesday.

Low-income families and individuals can qualify for a fan, depending upon need and the supply of fans. To qualify for an air conditioner, recipients must be on a limited or fixed income and submit a medical form signed by a doctor.

"On faith we'll receive the funds, we've had to order ahead twice so far," Fatzinger said. "Our hottest months are ahead of us, and September's no picnic. The heat came early, and it came hard."

Crisis Control does not have the supply of fans and air conditioners to keep up with demand, Fatzinger said. They now have only six air conditioners left, and anticipate demand to increase

through August and September. The air conditioners and fans are donated to Crisis Control Ministry, and donations are needed immediately.

Julia Davis, director of Social Work Services, said people can apply for housing and home improvement grants when in need of any necessary home appliance, including air conditioners and fans. A doctor's statement is necessary and income eligibility is required, similar to Crisis Control's procedure. The appliances from Social Services are paid for by a federal block grant, and the Crisis Control Ministry heat relief program is supported by donations.

The Department of Social Services received additional money this month for emergency cooling equipment, Davis said. Through the federal Crisis Intervention Energy Program, those with life threatening or severe health problems can receive air conditioners if they fall into low-income brackets. "Sometimes people with asthma or breathing problems are eligible," Davis said.



photo by Mike Cunningham

A local resident tries to find some relief from the recent sweltering temperatures.

## Black builder helping restore part of past

By VALERIE ROBACK GREGG  
Chronicle Staff Writer

An Afro-American developer is helping the city finish plans to redevelop an area of the city that was levelled 20 years ago during the days of urban renewal.

Marshall Isler's latest project is Salem Pointe, a 43-unit housing development south of Route 40 near Old Salem. His development firm, Isler and Associates of Durham, specializes in redeveloping barren land where condemned houses once stood and were demolished. "We specialize in public-private partnerships," Isler said.

Sales of the upscale, brightly painted, moderate-income housing at Salem Pointe began last week. The development includes nine single-family patio homes and 34 duplexes, half with three bedrooms and half with two bedrooms. A variety of building designs are available including cathedral ceilings, ceiling fans, sunken living rooms, wood burning fireplaces, self-cleaning ovens and private courtyards.

The unique aspect of the development is the way it fits the average budget, Isler said. "The objective affordability is \$22,000 a year," he said. With the creative financing available, Isler said a family could make monthly payments of \$441 on a home or duplex.

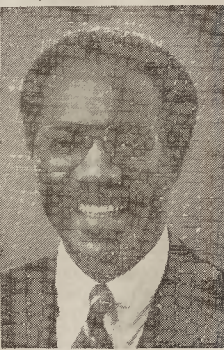
To design quality as well as affordability into the homes was difficult, but remained a priority throughout work on the project. Efficient, creative and attractive use of space helped the developer and architect achieve their goal, Isler said. "A lot of money and energy went into quality, every unit is custom designed," he said. "A lot of money went into the landscaping. We try to work openness into the homes so it feels a lot larger than it is."

Isler said that buyers can have a number of options, including basements and sunrooms, built into their homes if they have not yet been constructed.

Hubbard Realty is handling sales of the units, and Herman Turner, of Turner Development Ser-

VICES, oversees daily construction, sales, marketing and advertising. Turner Development works on a contractual basis and is based both in Durham and Winston-Salem.

Isler is now planning another development in conjunction with the city. An 80-unit redevelopment project called Goshen Place will go up in the city's Kimberly Park area next year and will be targeted at



Isler

low- to moderate-income residents. Although final negotiations with the city have not been completed, Isler said he is ready to start work. "It's up to the city to determine when they'll have their part of the money," Isler said.

The city must contribute a grant for improvements to the site and financing in order to make the units affordable, Isler said, but he estimates that work on the project will begin next year.

Isler and Associates have completed several other successful redevelopment projects including Rolling Hills in Durham. A development in Chapel Hill to be called for a project in Charlotte.

Isler grew up in Kinston, N.C., graduated with an engineering degree from Howard University, worked 16 years for the Navy Department and then served as president of a construction management firm. From there, he moved into the residential development business.

## Robinson: Target funds for the arts

State Senate Candidate, Vernon Robinson, suggests that legislation proposed to the General Assembly to increase arts funding should be targeted such that 25 percent of the funds are aimed at art programming that directly impacts on the Afro-American community. State arts

funding may not be as fairly distributed as it might be, according to Robinson. The 25 percent figure is proportionate to the state's Afro-American population. The arts appropriation measure seeks fund-

ing that is roughly equivalent to a dollar per person in North Carolina. "Increasing arts funding from \$3 1/2 million to \$6 million can only be fully justified if all segments of the community can participate and enjoy equally the benefits," says Robinson.

"Historically, the arts have bridged the gaps between seemingly distant cultures. For arts to be effective in terms of social exchange, each culture must partici-

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