



AVALON HOUSING inc.

Supportive Housing: The key to ending homelessness

Don't miss Pete Earley in Ann Arbor!

Sunday at the Earle with Avalon

- November 4th
 - 2-4 p.m. \$50 per person
 - The Earle Restaurant
- Avalon's annual benefit & community awards dinner features fine food and conversation. For tickets, www.avalonhousing.org

Crazy Justice: Panel Discussion

- November 5th
- 1-3 p.m. FREE and open to the public.
- University of Michigan Comprehensive Depression Center, Garden Level Auditorium, 4250 Plymouth Rd

Co-hosted by Avalon Housing and the Center. Moderated by Dr. Melvin McInnis; features Pete Earley, Senator Liz Brater, Deb Pippins, Supervisor of Judicial Project Outreach Team for CSTS, and Dr. William Cardasis, Director of the Admissions Unit at the Michigan Center For Forensic Psychiatry.

Crazy: A Father's Search Through America's Mental Health Madness

- Monday November 5th
- 7 p.m. FREE
- Ann Arbor District Library, Mallet's Creek Branch 3090 E. Eisenhower Pkwy

Pete Earley discusses his book and entertains questions from the public. Books will be available for sale and signing. Co-sponsored by NAMI and Nicola's Books.

For more information on these and other upcoming Avalon events, please go to avalonhousing.org

1992-2007: Fifteen Years of Supportive Housing in Ann Arbor

For middle income workers in Ann Arbor, finding decent affordable housing is a difficult proposition. For people working minimum wage jobs, or living on disability income, finding something decent and affordable is nothing less than a miracle.

But it's a miracle that Avalon Housing has made happen for more than 600 people since renting out its first six apartments at 201 West William Street in 1992.

Today - with 190 units in 18 locations, housing more than 250 tenants, including adults and children - Avalon's rents are still specifically intended to meet the needs of Ann Arbor's lowest income residents. The average one bedroom Avalon apartment is \$350 per month, while the market rate for a one bedroom in Ann Arbor is currently more than \$750 per month.

Emerging from the local emergency shelter in 1992, Avalon was organized to provide permanent housing for individuals with serious challenges to long-term housing success. For Carole McCabe, a former staffer at the shelter and Avalon's first Executive Director, the solution to homelessness was obvious. "We watched people get housing, then lose their housing and end up back in the shelter. It became increasingly clear that for many people who are homeless, the combination of affordable rents and individualized support services would make all the difference. This holds true today. Except we're seeing an even higher demand for housing like ours."



201 W. William was Avalon's very first property development

While it wasn't always the case, Supportive Housing is now being vigorously promoted by authorities at the state and federal level. In her recent testimony to Congress Carla Javits, Executive Director of the Corporation for Supportive Housing, makes it clear why: "Supportive housing is the only intervention proven to end the costly cycling from streets to shelters to emergency room and even to jails."

Kudos from Community

The West William property was not just Avalon's first development, it was a focus of community support for low-income housing.

"It was, indeed, a momentous occasion when 201 W. William, which was almost destroyed, rose to new life as Avalon's first development," remembers State Senator Liz Brater, who was Ann Arbor's Mayor in 1992. "Avalon has since been at the forefront of providing long-term affordable housing, helping people stay and flourish in our community."

"The DDA is very proud to have played a major role in that development," says Leah Gunn, county commissioner and member of the DDA. "The DDA paid to

move the house across the street and gave it to Avalon. It stands as a monument to the organization's tenacity and determination to provide affordable housing to the community."

As Avalon's first development, the William Street Apartments have provided a model for supportive housing projects, both in the city of Ann Arbor, as well as the State of Michigan. As a result, Avalon is recognized as a leader in the supportive housing movement.

"Avalon Housing had the right combination of foresight, vision, and capability to step forward in developing what has become one of the state's premier non-profit housing development organizations," says Chuck Keiffer, Executive Director of the Washtenaw Housing Alliance. "Their creativity and competence in developing a supportive housing model has succeeded in creating safe, decent, affordable, and stable housing for hundreds of individuals and families. Avalon is a leader among the many partners in our local *Blueprint to End Homelessness*."

Author of Crazy comes to Avalon



Pete Earley had no idea. He'd been a journalist for over thirty years, and the author of several award-winning-even bestselling-nonfiction books about crime and punishment and society. Yet he'd always been on the outside looking in. He had no idea what it was like to be on the inside looking out until his son, Mike, was declared mentally ill, and Earley was thrown headlong into the maze of contradictions, disparities, and catch-22s that is America's mental health system.

The more Earley dug, the more he uncovered the bigger picture: Our nation's prisons have become our new mental hospitals. *Crazy* tells two stories. The first is his son's. The second describes what Earley learned during a yearlong investigation inside the Miami-Dade County jail, where he was given complete, unrestricted access. There, and in the surrounding community, he shadowed inmates and patients; interviewed correctional officers, public defenders, prosecutors, judges, mental-health professionals, and the police; talked with parents, siblings, and spouses; consulted historians, civil rights lawyers, and legislators. The result is both a remarkable piece of investigative journalism, and a wake-up call—a portrait that could serve as a snapshot of any community in America.

Pete Earley is coming to Ann Arbor on behalf of Avalon to share his incredible story and experience. Please join us for these important events (see listing on right).

[reprinted courtesy of publisher]

PORTRAIT OF AN AVALON FRIEND

An Agent for Change



Property Development is at the core of Avalon's work. We buy and renovate properties, then rent them out to very low income tenants. Sounds simple enough, but as our friend and real estate ally, **Doug Smith** of Swisher Commercial Realty knows, property development with Avalon is anything but simple.

Doug Smith probably knew from the beginning that Avalon was a little different from his usual clients. Aside from being a non-profit - and social workers at that - with a mission of creating housing well below market rates, our funding is, well, complicated. An Avalon purchase typically has multiple financing sources with different applications, requirements, deadlines and procedures, some which may even conflict. And when we look at property to buy, it's not unusual for us to take 5-15 "friends" along with us to make sure what we're considering meets all our criteria for a viable project. The list of our challenges is long, but to this day, Doug remains undaunted by it all. Most importantly, he's helped Avalon find sellers with properties that fit the needs of our tenants, and he's worked tirelessly to make Avalon's housing available for hundreds of Ann Arbor residents.

Check out Doug's 1-2-3's of Income Property Ownership at swishercommercial.com

Doug Smith is the recipient of Avalon's 2007 Community Builder Award.

Way Cool Summer Camp: funded by IFCC



For the children, it was an opportunity to participate in a structured program, to gain new skills and explore their creativity while getting some exercise. For the parents, it offered a valuable respite during the no-school months of summer. And for the two tenants running the program, it provided a chance to earn some money, gain job skills and references, and play a leadership role in the community.

Thanks to the generosity of the Interfaith Council of Congregations, Avalon Housing's summer camp program at Carrot Way was a huge success for everyone involved. More than 40 children, including tenants and their relatives, took part in the camp activities.

Pictured above: Summer Bodies, a children's art project from the Carrot Community Center's 2007 Camp Program, was on display at Nicola's Books over the Labor Day weekend in September.

IN THE PIPELINE

Right now we're working on a project that has the potential to help more than 20 people who are homeless - or at risk - move into permanent stable housing right here in Ann Arbor. If you'd like to get involved or make a contribution to this important project, please contact Michael Appel at mappel@avalonhousing.org or give him a call at 734-663-5858.

In Other Words

My brother frequently tells me how he cherishes his apartment, and is beginning to see himself as part of a community now - a neighborhood where he is seeking to make a contribution. After witnessing years of pain and struggle, watching my brother heal and stabilize in the time he's been at Avalon has brought our family much comfort and joy. You have been a blessing.

- a family member of an Avalon tenant

Looking for our Annual Report? It's now available on line www.avalonhousing.org/annual-report

