



Dr. Joy Newmann: A Drum Major for Justice

by Betty Banks

Dr Joy Newmann's sense of humor will keep you laughing and her belief in social justice will keep you on your toes because she reminds us of those things we all need to do to further an agenda that includes justice for all.

Her vita and resume is long and academically impressive because she is well educated and well suited to weigh in on subjects about justice, civil rights and human rights. Those who consider her a friend know that when called upon, she will respond with strong support and kind words of compassion..

Joy's work in civil rights began in the early 60's when she was in social work school at Boston University. The inner-city of Boston was the beneficiary of her interest in social justice when she worked for The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) doing housing code violations investigation and when she did fundraising for The New School for Children, a school that addressed the needs of Black children.

And here in Wisconsin, she started a fair housing group in Watertown and included doing test visits to see if fair housing laws



were being violated when a home was for sale.

After moving to Madison in 1968 with her husband and children, she continued to push for civil rights as chair of the Education Committee for

the Madison EOC. In that capacity, she did several things. Among them was her work with the Superintendent's Human Relations Advisory Committee to integrate curriculum materials and teaching faculty at the grade school level.

Additionally, she assisted in the development of the Human Relations Program for the Madison public schools. Her interest in human relations led her to chair the State Committee on Human Relations, which drafted a certifica-

tion requirement for Wisconsin teachers requiring training in human and inter-group relations. Not only were these pioneering efforts, but Joy certainly paved the way for many of the human rights that we experience today.

Academically, she went back to school in 1972 at UW-Madison in sociology, finished her Master's degree and PhD studies and did a post doctoral fellowship in psychiatry before joining the Social Work faculty in 1985.

She is now retired from the School of Social Work at the UW-Madison where she was a Professor and Principal Investigator for the

and international initiatives that further human rights for all. Her dinner parties and other activities that take place in her home on Lake Monona all have a purpose.

She believes in social justice and works for this cause as she brings people from all walks of life and ethnicities together to bring about social change. Her strong support of President Barack Obama, has led her to continue to work locally to further his agenda for change.

She has taken a leadership role in Madison's Isthmus Neighborhood Team (MINT), a group of women and men who

Her work with a group of black and white women resulted in a pamphlet published by DPI on "How to Choose Books involving Black Characters for Children"

Women and Mental Health Study Site of Dane County. But retirement has not slowed her down. She continues a hobby involving ceramics, works out regularly to stay fit and has traveled to Africa with Global Partners for Development.

Her interest in empowering women has led her to fundraising for women's community groups in Uganda and Tanzania. She will be fundraising in Madison to support "heifer projects" in these countries.

Joy continues to support local

have made a commitment to raise voices at the grassroots level that will further shared beliefs of President Barack Obama.

In that role she has emphasized the importance of looking at social justice issues that affect us locally. How Joy weaves her beliefs about social justice in all that she does and how she lives them is what makes Dr Joy Newmann so deservedly to be called a bridge builder.

VOICES Newspaper

"We are each other's most valuable resource."

VOICES is published bi-monthly
VOICES

PO Box 1163 Madison WI 53701
Phone: 608-770-2049
Editorial Email: news@madisonvoices.com
Website: www.madisonvoices.com
Advertising and Classifieds Email: sales@madisonvoices.com

Editor: Jeanne Erickson
Managing Editor: GBD
Copy Editors: Betty Banks, Jeanne - *Erickson
Page Layout & Design Graphics: Leccia and Associates, Inc. - Bill Breitsprecher
Sales and PR: Leccia and Associates, Inc.
Web Design: Bill Breitsprecher www.breitlinks.com
Illustrator: Marcus Nickels
Photography: Lucy Gibson, GBD, Jeanne Erickson, A. David Dahmer

Columnists:
Betty Banks...Building Bridges, This 'N That
Bill Breitsprecher.....School Matters
Freddie Clark.....Commentaries
Susan Corrado.....It's All About Health
Gail-Perry Daniels.....Letters to the Village
Carousel Bayrd.....Letter to District 8
Linda Ketcham.....MUM Social Connections
Tiger.....All The Best Answers
Senator RisserServing the People
Representative Berceau.....Working for ...
Brian SolomonDistrict 10 Update
Reporters/ Contributing Writers:
Mayor Dave Cieslewicz; Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk, Robert Artis, Carla Dawkins, Jeanne Erickson, GBD, Lucy Gibson, Julie Laundrie, Leslie McAllister
Distribution: City of Madison Businesses, and Institutions; Carrier Delivery and Direct Mail
Copyright 2010 Comm-Unity Voices, Inc. All rights reserved

Meet Your Neighbor: Rockameen

by Lucy Gibson

To tell the story of Rockameen's life in this small space is impossible, but we want to try to give an inkling of his unusual story.

Rockameen's life has been hard from the beginning, when he was born in 1949 to a 16-year-old mother who had been kicked out of her family home at 15 for getting pregnant, and who turned to prostitution to support herself and her child.

As you can imagine, she didn't do a brilliant job of mothering. In fact, Rockameen says, "My mom...created child abuse...My whole life has been somewhat abusive, plus, bein' black ain't helped it..."

Maybe he wouldn't have survived if he hadn't been so intelligent, but he remembers accomplishments at an early age that put him in a genius category - not his word, but one that this reporter thinks would apply.

He learned to read before he entered kindergarten, in spite of his barren circumstances, as well as to count money and shoot dice. Unfortunately, he also learned to drink, smoke, and curse. "I started performin' when I was three," he says, "tap dancin' in bars. By the time I was five I was an alcoholic, smokin' three packs of cigarettes a day."

Rockameen says he "hustled" as a child, by which he means he did whatever he could find to support himself - tap dancing in bars, shining shoes, shooting dice.



He and his mother lived in Woodlawn at the time, and he attended Hyde Park High, which was a good school. He started taking University of Chicago classes when he was in 6th grade. But when he was a sophomore, his mother moved to the Robert Taylor Projects, and he transferred to DuSable High, a much poorer school. He got beaten up regularly, and dropped out of school a few credits short of graduation. From then, he lived by hustling,

until he was 18, when he joined the Marines. He loved it - there were three meals a day, and plenty of clothes. He was taught to kill - he says he had "18 weeks of kill class" - and in Vietnam, he and his fellow troops found people to kill.

After four years in the Marines, Rockameen was honorably discharged. He moved to Chicago, where he got involved with an African drum and dance organization called Muntu Dance Theater.

He stayed involved with it for a long time, traveling all over for drumming performances. As his story unfolded, I had the impression that might have been the happiest time of his life, although he several times expressed the idea that it's dangerous for him to be happy, because as soon as he gets happy, something

bad happens to him. When Rockameen first came to Madison, he started working at the UW doing drumming. For years now, he has made his living by drumming performances, and by teaching drumming.

Rockameen would like to invite anyone interested in learning African style drumming to call him at 469-2234. He can provide drums for students to use until they get their own.