

Your local news source ::
Select a community or newspaper »

\$510,000 Mortgage for Under \$1,698/Month!

Think You Pay Too Much for Your Mortgage? Find Out!

Click Your State

Click Your Rate

Click Credit Type

CLASSIFIED

HOMES
 JOBS
 AUTOS

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

suntimes.com Member of the Sun-Times News Group

35°F
Cloudy

Traffic • Weather: "PRESENTABLE"

Search »

Site STNG

[Make us your Home Page](#)

- [Subscribe](#)
- [Reader Rewards](#)
- [Customer Service](#)
- [Email newsletters](#)

Home | News | Sports | Business | Entertainment | Classifieds | Columnists | Lifestyles | Ebert | Search | Archives | Blogs | RSS [XML](#)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR :: [PRINTER FRIENDLY](#) » [EMAIL ARTICLE](#) »

Commentary

- [Today's commentary](#)
- [Editorials](#)
- [Letters to the Editor](#)
- [Submit letters](#)
- [Editorial Cartoon](#)

News

- [Archive](#)
- [Today's news](#)
- [Metro & Tri-State](#)
- [Nation](#)
- [World](#)
- [Blogs](#)
- [Commentary](#)
- [Editorials](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Elections](#)
- [Lottery](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [Politics](#)
- [Religion](#)
- [Weather](#)
- [Special Sections](#)
- [George Ryan Trial](#)
- [Hired Truck Scandal](#)

Columnists

- [Monroe Anderson](#)
- [Tom Bevan](#)
- [Mark Brown](#)
- [Cathleen Falsani](#)
- [Ed Feulner](#)
- [Stella Foster](#)
- [Andrew Greeley](#)
- [Betsy Hart](#)
- [Jack Higgins](#)
- [Steve Huntley](#)
- [Jesse Jackson](#)
- [Mary Laney](#)
- [Jeremy Levitt](#)
- [Carol Marin](#)
- [Ralph Martire](#)
- [Tom McNamee](#)
- [Rich Miller](#)
- [Mary Mitchell](#)
- [Robert Novak](#)
- [John O'Sullivan](#)
- [Suzanne Ontiveros](#)
- [Other Views](#)
- [Debra Pickett](#)
- [QT](#)
- [Cindy Richards](#)
- [Richard Roeper](#)
- [Dick Simpson](#)
- [Michael Sneed](#)
- [Neil Steinberg](#)
- [Mark Steyn](#)
- [Lynn Sweet](#)
- [Laura Washington](#)
- [George Will](#)
- [The Fixer](#)

Task force finds a new future for an old factory

December 24, 2006

David Roeder's column on the proposed redevelopment of the former Frederick Cooper lamp factory on Diversey Parkway in Logan Square rightly starts off praising Ald. Flores in his decision to support Baum Realty's "Green Exchange" adaptive re-use ["Rezko's South Loop property lags behind neighboring parcel," business section, Nov. 29]. However, it does not do the story justice in ignoring the way this community came together around the issues of job and business loss to overturn efforts by condo developers and to call for broader business development.

Well before the factory closed in August 2005, a coalition of community members, institutions, organizations and soon-to-be-laid-off workers joined forces as the Cooper Lamps Community Taskforce. Its main goals were to obtain a fair severance package for the workers, along with job training and placement assistance, to secure a jobs-generating future use for the building and to focus on a larger effort to retain and expand business opportunities in the area that would create head-of-household jobs for community residents. It was this campaign that won the support of Flores and laid the foundation for the Baum proposal.

While green exchange may not be a blue-collar jobs generator, it will create significant permanent jobs in the building and has the potential to attract small manufacturers and suppliers tied to these green businesses to an area north of Diversey that the alderman is considering as a Planned Manufacturing District.

Baum has generated a lot of interest and excitement already for this project. Roeder can help by directing sustainable business tenants to the building and explaining to his readership how a focus on energy efficiency, sustainability and green development just might be the right idea at the right time to create a new business future for an old factory. If it can also spur the redevelopment of a nearby industrial corridor and create head-of-household jobs in the process, so much the better.

Mike Holzer, director of economic development,

Local Economic

& Development Council

Have a bright idea?

Are you an armchair quarterback? I mean, do you have great ideas that you express to yourself and to those who will listen, but that's as far as it goes?

Those ideas could change the world. There's many ways to share your ideas. Have you ever written a letter to the editor? Do you vote? Some of the best ideas have never been shared with the people who can put them into play.

Maybe today is the day for you to get into the game!

Kristin Joan Bladek,

Woodridge

DCFS workers deserve a raise

I applaud your commentary on pay increases for Cook County prosecutors and public defenders. My colleagues and I interact with many of these hardworking individuals in our similar role of looking out for the welfare of society's most helpless victims. We do this by protecting children as administrators with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

We, too have been denied pay increases, including cost-of-living increases, and are told the state's budget crisis is to blame. Low morale has emerged among the various non-union staff. It becomes equally frustrating to see many of us with unionized subordinates making more money than us as they cash in on overtime and compensatory time earned meeting the increasing demands of ensuring the health and safety of children. My colleagues and I are educated, well-trained and are committed to our jobs. What we aren't is valued.

LANE BRYANT

Sizes 14-28

free shipping

on any order of \$100 or more.

[Details >>](#)

VIDEO :: MORE >>

- Godfather of Soul, James Brown Dies**

Play
- Fans Mourn the 'Godfather of Soul'**

Play
- Wishes of Hope at NYC Midnight Mass**

Play

TOP STORIES ::

NEWS
['Hero' dies day after robbery, shooting](#)

BUSINESS
[Looking a better way](#)

SPORTS
[Last hurrah for Farve? Don't Brett on it](#)

ENTERTAINMENT
[Godfather of soul](#)

LIFESTYLES
[Be gone!](#)

BLOGS ::

FULL COURT PRESS
[Should Bears rest starters last two games?](#)

HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL
[Tez to Illinois](#)

HOEKSTRA
[Its Over For the Under](#)

MITCHELL
[Merry Christmas or Happy Holidays](#)

PICKETT
[Friday's column: Breast-feeding is the new labor](#)

SWEET:
[The Obama backlash. It's started.](#)

THE GOLD RUSH:
[Chicago homegirls Oprah, Fey get award-show props](#)

Ron Krueger, Lockport

Good riddance to Kofi Annan

Finally, there is hope on the horizon. The utterly useless Kofi Annan is mercifully at the end of his term, giving new hope that the U.N. will finally stand for something other than Useless Non-entity. I don't think that in the history of the United Nations has a leader been that ineffective.

Scott Sinclair, Gurnee

Reform bloated pension plan

The Sun-Times recently featured several articles on the financial condition of Illinois, noting that an important component of the state's precarious financial position was unfunded pension liabilities caused by overly generous employee pension plans.

With pension plans as a serious financial consideration, we should consider the poster child for pension plans run amok the egregious pension plan adopted by the Cook County Board. Recently, it was reported that Commissioner Bobbie Steele, who served for four months as president, will increase her pension benefits from \$85,000 to \$170,000 per year, as a result of such service.

Steele's Web-based biography cites a high school graduation date of 1954, which would approximate her birth year at 1936. According to IRS mortality tables, Steele's life expectancy at age 70 is 17 years, so her four-month stint as Cook County Board president created an additional unfunded pension liability of about \$1.445 million.

Since the additional \$85,000 per year for Steele represents 100 percent of the real estate taxes paid by a whole row of Chicago bungalows, we should find a row and name the street after Steele. That's the least we can do.

Donald A. Jacobsen, Loop

Will voters ever learn?

It was announced after the election that the assessment freeze on real estate taxes will not be extended. We have about 3 percent inflation and those on Social Security will receive a 3.2 percent increase in their monthly checks, while real estate taxes go up 30-plus percent.

Commonwealth Edison needs a rate increase of 20 percent to 26 percent while it is one of the lowest-cost power generators in the United States. Its parent company, Exelon, pays its president, John Rowe, more than \$27.5 million a year. The total compensation for the top five executives of ComEd and Exelon was \$46,742,927. Some of the Chicago politicians say they are afraid ComEd will go bankrupt. We need to know why. Watch those campaign contributions.

The citizens of Cook County voted in the son of a man who has run Cook County into severe debt. And the acting president retires with an extra-large increase in her pension as the result of four-plus months being the acting president of Cook County. Will the voters ever learn?

Real estate taxes are taxes being charged on home value, but the profit is not made until it is sold.

James L. Rooney, Lemont

Why no updates on Darfur?

The crisis in Darfur is one of the most pressing dramatic issues of the world. However, our media seem to be avoiding bringing the American people news of what is going on. In the past month, there has been a minimal amount of articles on the conflict.

Three hundred thousand people have been killed in the last two years by a government-hired and -sponsored organization. An additional million people have been forced out of their homes into the desert, left to starve to death. Why is America sitting idly by while these atrocities are occurring? Could it be because the public is not informed and has no idea the extent of the damage being done?

These mass murders must be dealt with, and the first step is to get the word out. The American people deserve to know what is going on in the world and deserve an explanation why the media feel this isn't important, even when millions lay either homeless or dead.

Michael Robinson, Hinsdale

Ads by Google

Know Your Pension

How can you be sure your pension is safe?
knowyourpension.org

City Chicago Jobs

Paid Training. \$18-\$115k All Occupations. 312-976-5454 24hrs
www.federalcityjobs.us/chicago/

Underfunded Pension Plans

Valuation & consulting to help you meet HR & financial objectives
www.primorisadvisors.com

Pension Plan Experts

Pensions, IRA's, 412i, 419e, Roth, Annuity, Insurance 35yr Experience
www.bobfalisey.com

Pension Advances

Need Cash out of your Pension? Call AFG Now - 888 753 4562
www.earlycash4u.com

suntimes.com: [Feedback](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Advertise With Us](#) | [Media Kit](#) | [Make Us Your Homepage](#)
Chicago Sun-Times: [Subscribe](#) | [Customer Service](#) | [Online Photo Store](#) | [The Sun-Times Store](#)



© Copyright 2006 Sun-Times News Group | [User Agreement](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Member of the
Real Cities Network



