

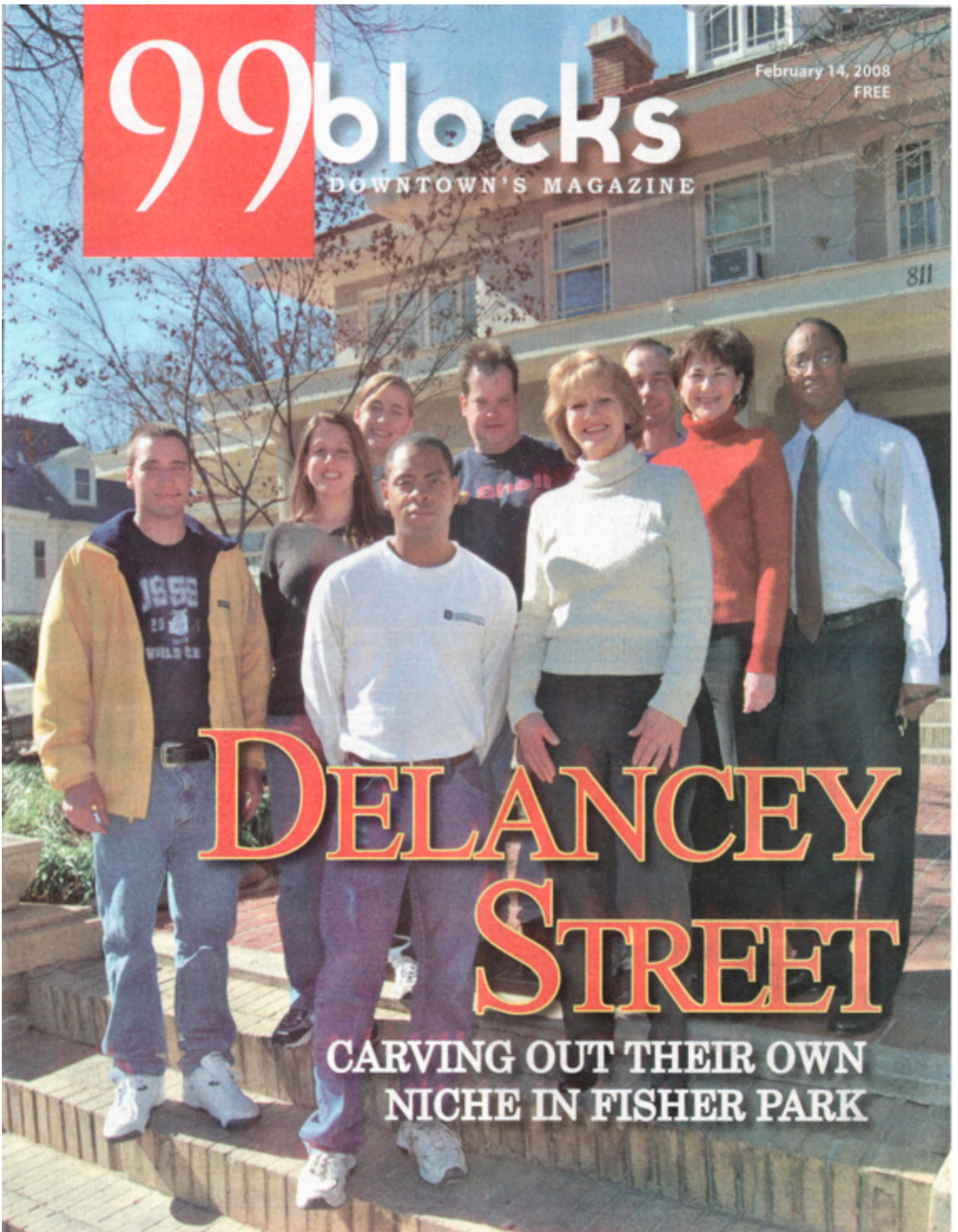
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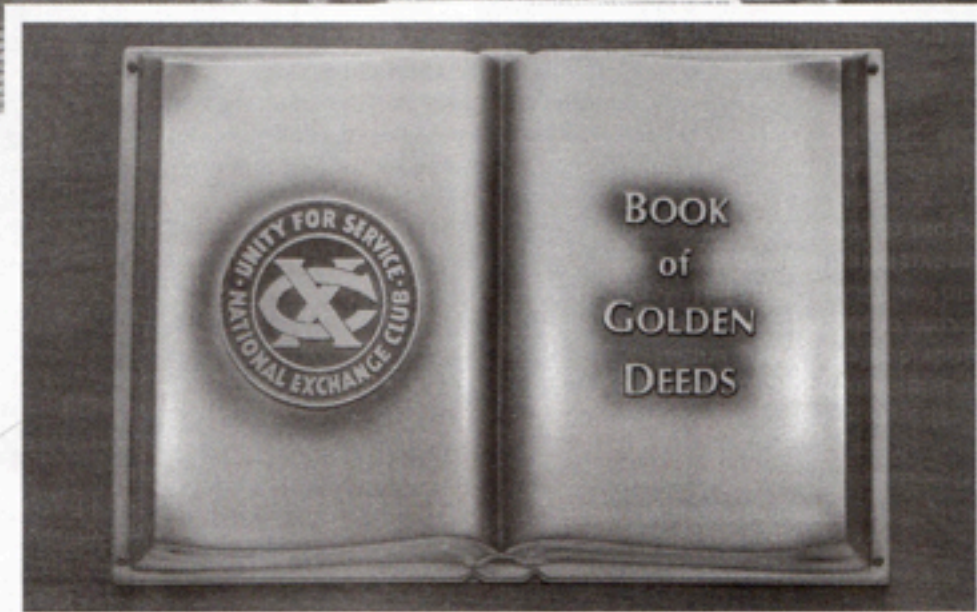
February 14, 2008
FREE

DELANCEY STREET

CARVING OUT THEIR OWN
NICHE IN FISHER PARK



COVER
STORY



DELANCEY STREET

CARVING OUT THEIR OWN NICHE IN FISHER PARK

By Eddie Huffman

A group home for substance abusers and ex-felons in an upscale historic neighborhood might seem rife with potential conflict, but in Greensboro's first park suburb, the mix has resulted in years of harmony.

The Fisher

Park Neighborhood Association doesn't just tolerate the **Delancey Street North Carolina** house at 811 N. Elm -- recently it gave the home its highest award.

"I'm personally thrilled to have them in the neighborhood," says **John McLendon**, an attorney with Schell, Bray, Aycok, Abel and Livingston and president of the neighborhood association.

The home helps the neighborhood in ways small -- call if you need help moving a piece of furniture -- and large.

"They work so much on the park when we have the cleanup day," says **Vicky Vanstory Saunders**, a Realtor with Yost and Little and vice president of the neighborhood association. "When other people don't come, they come."

Mimi Silbert founded the Delancey Street Foundation in San Francisco in 1972 as an alternative approach to rehabilitation. Rather than put people in clinics, its homes across the country put people to work, using peer pressure and support to give them a second chance as they learn job and social skills. The Greensboro home celebrated its 20th anniversary last year.

"What Mimi wanted to do was bring in people who had only ever lived in crime-type situations, poverty-type situations," says **Elizabeth Garland**, a resident of Greensboro's Delancey Street home who works as a clerk for its highly successful moving company. "If you live in a nice place, it will make you feel good about yourself. We have really carved out our own niche here in Fisher Park -- we are part of the community, and we're proud of that."

So is the neighborhood association, which gave the home its **Captain Fisher Award** in November, crediting its



CATHLENE COLE



TIFFANY HOOVER



ELIZABETH GARLAND

residents for "strenuous weeding and hauling vegetation from our park," coordinating the park's annual Easter egg hunt, hanging an annual Christmas-light display that "shows off one of our neighborhood's best examples of Prairie-style architecture," running a Christmas tree sales lot downtown and inviting neighbors in for its regular Sunday brunch.

"Many of you come to recognize your own weaknesses and your strengths more clearly than many of us," the award presentation reads. "Many of you give of yourselves to Fisher Park more than many of us. You are admired!"



BRANDY TILLMAN



DARRYL SANSBURY

They don't just decorate their own home. "We do all the decorating of the Wrangler building for Christmas -- outside, of course," says **Cathlene Cole**, resident-manager of the Greensboro home who came here from Los Angeles.

Delancey Street North Carolina is one of the foundation's smaller homes, averaging about 20 to 25 residents. In addition to its moving business, it also does landscaping and small-scale retail and furniture-restoration work.

"As a Realtor I hear rave reviews about their moving abilities," Saunders says. "I have two friends who wouldn't use anyone else. How many times does that happen, that you get a glowing report about a moving company?"

Garland could have moved on rather than continuing to work

with Delancey Street Moving and Trucking -- residents typically "graduate" from the program after 21 months, returning to the community. But the Charlotte native has stayed on several months after her graduation date to give back to a program she credits with rescuing her from two and a half decades of addiction to prescription drugs.

"Once you get in Delancey Street, it's really about educating yourself to be good mothers, good fathers, good citizens," Garland says. "It's all about change. It's saved my life, and changed my life."

Eddie Huffman is a freelance writer.