

Group holds vigil inside HUD office

United Press International
DALLAS — Seven members of a group of low- and moderate-income families held an all-night vigil at the Department of Housing and Urban Development office but a HUD official Tuesday refused to hold further talks with them.

About 100 members of the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now packed into the HUD office on Monday but Regional Manager Irving Statman and all but seven ACORN members left by 9:30 p.m.

"We talked until 9 p.m. until I saw it was quite evident they were more interested in getting publicity than answers," Statman said Tuesday. "I talked to them in good faith but we went over and over the same things."

The incident was part of a nationwide protest to encourage HUD to expand and accelerate its homesteading program for abandoned houses in low-rent neighborhoods. Area ACORN members threatened to remain overnight at HUD houses in Dallas and Fort Worth.

ACORN regional organizer Terry Andrews had told the news media that Statman had threatened arrests of the all-night squatters, but the regional manager denied it — saying he had left any such decision to the building manager.

"Frankly I didn't want to have them arrested," he said. "That's what they wanted me to do."

"They said they were going to stay until I talked to them. But I'm not going to talk to them."

Statman said law and city ordinances prohibited him from granting any of the ACORN requests. He said he had promised to answer by letter one ACORN question about the time limit on repairs because he was reluctant to answer without checking with his staff.

Andrews said one of the key demands is that there be no limit to the value of property eligible for homesteading.

"Right now, there's a limit of \$15,000 set seven years ago," he said. "A house worth \$15,000 seven years ago could now be worth \$30,000 now. But since

UT cyclist crossing country

United Press International
PRATT, Kan. — A Texas woman neared the midway point of her 2,900-mile cross-country bicycling trip, fighting 25-mph Kansas headwinds in her attempt to ride from California to New York in 13 days.

Ann Kovich, 28, of Austin, is trying to become the first woman to cross the United States on a bicycle. She left Santa Monica, Calif., on June 1 and plans to end her trip at New York's City Hall on June 13.

The University of Texas graduate student zoomed through Pratt on Monday after cycling about 1,350 miles.

She has averaged 18 hours a day on her lightweight 10-speed bike, backed up by a seven-member support crew that includes her coach, who rides alongside, and a cook, bike mechanic and other helpers in a van and recreational vehicle.

Strong Kansas headwinds last weekend forced Kovich, who must consume about 10,000 calories a day to maintain her strength, to a four-hour halt, according to trip coordinator Woody Raine.

Raine said the trip had gone well although Kovich must undergo at least two 30-minute massage sessions each day to relieve soreness in her arms, legs and back.

HUD has not raised its limit, it has effectively killed the homesteading program."

Other demands from the Dallas group included the abolition of minimum income requirements for the program, the extension of boundaries for neighborhoods in the program, the abolition of the lottery system now used to distribute the

homes and the creation of a system to allot them on the basis of need.

The national ACORN organization, which boasts over 40,000 members, also is calling on HUD to make it easier for low- and moderate-income families to obtain low interest loans and grants for home rehabilitation work.

New computer takes dictation

United Press International
HOUSTON — No one has invented a computer that can think — but scientists have come up with one nifty number that takes dictation.

A California-based computer firm official claims his company's machine responds to voice commands and obeys correctly 99 percent of the time.

"You can get twice the productivity because you don't

have to stop your work or take your eyes off what you are doing," said Bertam Weinstein of Interstate Electronics Corp. "Just tell the computer and it will understand."

Weinstein's company was one of about 650 exhibitors showing the latest and most advanced technology Monday at the National Computer Conference in the Astro-dome.

Computers have been developed to transmit color pictures or graphics to other computers several feet away or several thousand miles away. Other machines can control climates inside buildings, monitor security, help increase productivity or regulate inventory.

And, of course, computers can be used for education as well as entertainment. Video

games drew long lines at conference.

But only the voice-act machine, which was first developed about four years ago, can free the eyes and hands of the user.

For instance, Weinstein said, a pathologist looking brain tissue under a microscope can feed information into the computer without stopping his examination.

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