

## JUST NOT FAIR

By Judith I. Johannsen

Some things in life just aren't fair and when unfair things happen they are plain as day. So, here's a list of "not fair" things:

- Waiting patiently for a car to back out of a parking space so you can have it and then someone scoots in ahead of you and takes it. And then s/he smiles at you.
- Someone else winning the lottery.
- Having to sit in the back of the bus in Montgomery, Alabama in the 1950s because you're not white.
- A big kid bullying a small kid.
- Being rejected for a rental apartment in 2007 because you have brown skin.
- Being next in line for the corner office and the new guy gets it.
- Being told there are no rental apartments available even though there is still a "For Rent" sign in the window, yard, newspaper.
- Shoveling snow off your driveway only to have the town's snowplow deposit more snow at the end of your driveway so you can't get out (the Sisyphus syndrome).
- A landlord rejecting your application to rent because he learns you have been a victim of domestic violence in the past.
- Coal in your Christmas stocking.
- Being rejected for a rental apartment because you are a Jew, a Catholic, a Buddhist, a follower of Islam or any other religion not wanted, liked or understood by the landlord.
- Life.
- Being rejected for a rental unit when the landlord learns that you are African American, Asian, Indian, Polish, Puerto Rican, or otherwise not Caucasian, even though your credit, employment position, salary and references are excellent.
- Buying a box of Cracker Jack and not getting a prize.
- Being black in the South and not being able to use the "whites only" water fountain even though you were really thirsty.
- Being told by a landlord that he won't accept Section 8 housing vouchers when you qualify for public housing assistance.
- Hiding the ball in the middle of the game.
- Being told "no" when you are wheelchair bound and ask your landlord to build a ramp so you can have access to your apartment.
- Beautiful people/celebrities earning obscene amounts of money for making movies, receiving special treatment at restaurants and lavish gifts at awards ceremonies when "regular" people do real work every day for not much money, no star treatment and no gifts.
- Being told that the landlord will not accept you as a tenant because you are using the Security Deposit Guarantee Program and he wants "cash up front".
- Having elected Senators and Representatives in Washington D. C. receiving extraordinary and wonderful health insurance but who can't find a way to provide the same to their constituents.

In our world, there are a lot of things that are just not fair, and despite federal and state fair housing laws, the Archie Bunker mentality still has breath and discrimination in housing persists. In a fair and just world, neither prospective tenants would fail to receive fair treatment by landlords nor prospective buyers rejected by sellers because of skin color, religion, national origin, accented speech, disabilities or lawful source of income.