

# TOWN 76 MEETING

# uptown

*"a great place to be alive"*

## A GLORIOUS DAY FOR UPTOWN

Young and old Uptowners were surprised by the "Uptown Town Meeting 76" held Saturday, March 13, at the Robert R. McCormick Chicago Boys Club.

"I thought this would be boring--but it was fun!", commented a Boy Scout of Troop 1495. Another youngster, a boy aged 13, found another thing worth noting: "I was surprised my idea got used." An older participant explained, "The young people did not expect what they had to say would be listened to, but it was."

Working within a well-tested format, participants voiced their concerns for the community, analyzed elements that are keeping those concerns from being met, and formulated approaches for solving some of the community's problems. They also wrote a community song, chose a motto ("Uptown is alive!") and authored a story of the community.

Venson Brown, program director of the Boys Club at 4835 N. Sheridan Road, had his own reasons to be surprised at the day's results: "This many people together at one time--and no fights!" Brown added, "This was a glorious day for the Boys Club."

The club loaned the full use of its facilities and its staff for the occasion.

Total attendance at the all-day affair was estimated at 615. Ages ranged from small children to octagenarians, and a wide spread of economic conditions was represented. A broad spectrum of racial and ethnic backgrounds could be seen among the participants.

Uptown's Town Meeting, an officially recognized Bicentennial event, was the 200th such gathering to be held under the auspices of the Institute of Cultural Affairs, which has its world headquarters at 4750 N. Sheridan Road. Nearly 5,000 Town Meetings in various parts of the United States are projected to be held by July 1977.

A local steering committee planned and produced the Uptown event under the sponsorship of nineteen Uptown businesses, agencies and organizations. Over 100 building managers, businesses, agencies and organizations sold tickets for the Town Meeting and even more displayed posters and distributed flyers.

Entertainment was provided by American Indians of the community, singer Al Turner, former Uptown resident Glen Pine, and others. Mr. and Mrs. Jessie Cole acted as masters of ceremonies for the affair.

Civic leaders including Illinois representative William Marovitz and 48th Ward Alderman Dennis Block welcomed the gathering. President Gerald Ford sent a telegram expressing his regrets at not being able to attend and extending his best wishes.

Those who attended were not shy about expressing their enthusiasm. "We're not finished, we're just getting started," commented one older participant who stayed for the entire day. "When will we have another one like this?" was another person's reaction. And an elderly widow took a broader view: "These should go on all over the city."

And one "Town Meeter" made this prediction: "Uptown will never be the same again!"

### SPONSORS

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*Uptown Lions Club*

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