

## INDEPENDENCE

02-04-2013 By Harry Zirkelbach

Independence.

The very word screams democracy to Americans.

This derives from our shoddy understanding of the Declaration of Independence. Debated by the Continental Congress for months, with facts presented to the world, it was signed by all 56 delegates from the thirteen colonies, dated July 4 1776. In the Declaration of Independence from Great Britain, much of the wording is given to "candid facts of grievances" has 15 "He Has", and 9 "For" accusations.

That Declaration, on one sheet, had many home over the years until 12/13/1952 when Harry Truman finalized transfer to the National Archives Building for safe keep and display. It is considered to be in excellent condition. One notable fact to the world, the readable, florid, penmanship, the signature of

*John Hancock*

the sole signee for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Yet, ties remained,. Much inherited through the common language, in which the Declaration is written. And as proclaimed on the edifice to the Canadian Immigration Building bordering the state of Washington, "Children of a Common Mother".

In the daily strife we call life, little in this universe has independence. We adapt.

Family, religion, community just about everything, requires Interdependence.  
One individual, a part of the whole.

In the summer of 1995 July 12 through 16, the City of Chicago experienced a heat wave that bordered 106 degree during the day and low 80s at night. There were 750 heat related deaths. The immediate cause of death, heat, starvation and dehydration. But more.

Studies that followed showed women fared better than men, had stronger ties to friends and family, less prone to isolation. Latinos, in high poverty areas, fared better than other ethnic groups in densely packed apartment neighborhoods, survived, where dying alone nearly impossible. It has been estimated that neighborhoods with a robust social structure are equivalent to having a working air-conditioner in each room. Further neighborhoods with a robust social

infrastructure are improved during ordinary times as well as disasters. Now in Chicago and other cities, media and city agencies notify the vulnerable in times of high heat days.

There were other factors in this catastrophe; one, City and the Electric company were not prepared.

Investment in research by all U.S. electric power utilities in United States was \$700 million, compared with 6.3 billion by IBM, \$9.1 billion by Pfizer. Then the Dept. of Energy passed a \$3.4 billion stimulus grants across the States to build robust networks. One immediate gain, smarter power grid means reduced electric consumption in all weather.

We are entering an age of extremes. We need to pro-build with the future of climate change in mind.

The recent storm named Sandy emphasized this. There was a five day blackout in lower Manhattan because the walls protecting Con-Ed substation flooded equipment; explosions and outage followed. Entire subways flooded. The immediate need then, restore power then services. Long term, the present national system will have to be radically changed, for it is believed Sandy's major storm can come to American cities. Denver, and all cities, have the same fragile electrical grid, lack of preparedness

Wall Street and Windsor Garden require uninterrupted electricity to perform. Planning now is needed. Business and individual remain interdependent.