

Waco Community Development

“We’re revitalizing neighborhoods.”

March 2008



254-235-7358

1624 Colcord Ave.

www.WacoCDC.org

REINVESTING IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

by Mike Stone

Many years ago, one word described our neighborhood, “divested.” People were not investing their money or efforts in this neighborhood. Most of the neighborhood’s property owners were just trying to squeeze whatever they could out of their property. Now things have changed, people are no longer divesting they are investing in this neighborhood.

Brook Oaks Senior Residences which is under construction, will feature 54 one-bedroom rental apartments for seniors 62 years and up making no more than 50% of the area’s median income (\$17,650 for one resident). Residents will pay no more than 30% of their income for rent. This opportunity is an approximate \$6 million investment in the community.



Family Health Center is expanding their operations in our community by adding 16,000 sq. ft. This will expand the pharmacy as well as the mental health department. The Family Health Center is investing approximately \$2.3 Million into the community.



The City of Waco is undertaking major upgrades to the area as evidenced by the construction on Bosque between 9th and 12th Streets.

The plan is to turn N.11th and 12th Streets back to two-way streets, upgrade the infrastructure and install sidewalks along Bosque Blvd. The total project is \$800,000.



Waco Community Development, two other non-profits and several independent builders have constructed 38 new homes and remodeled 8 homes in the neighborhood. A total of \$3 million has been invested in this area of North Waco. We have almost completed Street of Dreams II located at 15th & Morrow. All five of the new homes are under contract and ready for final commitments and contracts.



Most importantly, the neighborhood homeowners are re-investing in their homes. All around the neighborhood you

Calendar Ways to Get Involved

***3rd Session 2008**

6- 8 PM for 6WKS

Homebuyer Education I.

First Class / Thurs. Apr. 24th
To register call (254) 235-7358.

Classes are free!

***April 2008**

Homebuyer Education II.

Saturday, April 19, 2008

Call the office to register.

Classes are free.

***April 9, 2008**

Waco Community Development
Board of Directors meeting.

can see evidence of remodeling and refurbishing of existing homes.



All of these efforts are great signs for the neighborhood, and I think the word for our neighborhood has changed. It is now “reinvestment!”





Issue 19 - 2008

Newsletter of Waco Community Development, a Christian-based organization committed to promoting housing, economic, and community development throughout Waco.

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Another View

by Christian Tamayo

Growing up in Waco, I never really saw the need that the city has. It can actually be easy to miss if you are not really looking or simply ignore it. While in high school, I focused on trying to keep high grades and simply getting by doing as little as possible. This meant I did little community service and had even less involvement in the City of Waco.

My awareness dwindled even more when I went to college. I traveled to upstate New York, and most social research I read revolved around large urban areas like New York and Chicago. From my perspective, Waco did not seem to fall in to these kinds of categories. I did not see Waco as suffering from Urban Blight. I wanted to come back to Waco for some time before possibly going to one of these large cities. I am very glad I made the decision to come back to Waco.

Having the opportunity to work with Waco Community

Development, I have seen that Waco has need of its own, and a lot of potential for economic and community growth. Just because this town is not on the national radar does not mean it is exempt from the same problems of those large urban areas. As Waco continues to grow, I look forward to the progress that North Waco will make as it becomes the successful, diverse neighborhood that it is destined to be.

BEING NEIGHBORLY

On March 1, Calvary Baptist Church took to the streets to have conversations with their neighbors that live within Waco Community Development's neighborhood. As the volunteers went from door-to-door we were looking for people with a passion for their community and those who were willing to work with others to create a stronger neighborhood.

While going from home to home we found many

people were delighted to have a discussion about their community. Many people were excited about the difference that Waco Community Development has made with the new homes and neighborhood improvement projects in the area. Many neighbors were lifelong residents who knew everyone on their street and looked out for each other. We plan to connect further with individuals that were identified during this learning walk and work with them to continue to revitalize the neighborhood.

Great job Calvary Baptist Church! We are excited to see you so involved in our neighborhood.

by Dori Messarra



DARRELL AND CLAUDIA TRAVEL TO CALIFORNIA

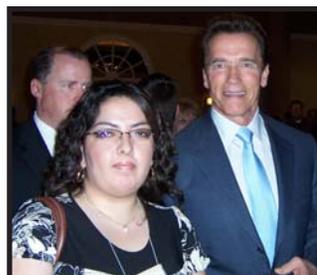
By Claudia Olivas-Meza

On February 10th - 16th, Darrell Abercrombie and I traveled to Sacramento, California to participate in the National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling Training, sponsored by NeighborWorks America and NeighborWorks Center for Homeownership Education and Counseling (NCHEC).

This training is part of a \$180-million congressional appropriation fund targeted to incrementing the availability of foreclosure counseling services all across the nation. There were a variety of courses offered ranging from Foreclosure Intervention & Default Counseling to Credit Counseling for Maximum Results and Introduction to Housing Counseling.

On Tuesday, February 12th, Darrell and I met California's Governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Senator Mike Machado at an event reception. Both guest speakers spoke about the critical problem the nation is facing with foreclosures.

This training will surely help Darrell and me better serve our clients. We had a great time!



Claudia & Governor Schwarzenegger

2008 NeighborWorks America & NCHEC National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling Training

Claudia & Senator Mike Machado



BOLD STEPS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS by Walker Moore

Last year some community members met with the principals of our two neighborhood schools, Brook Avenue Elementary and West Avenue Elementary, to share and discuss their dreams about the future. One of our biggest dreams was that parents would become more fully engaged in their child's learning experience. It has been exciting to see this dream become reality as both schools are now implementing plans to increase parental involvement.

Brook Avenue Elementary's kick off event was a Family Friendly Learning Walk. On most Learning Walks, school personnel walk through classrooms to observe classroom management, teaching strategies, and whether or not students are actually learning. Principal Jessica Hicks of Brook Avenue Elementary took the bold step to work with Parents For Public Schools and Waco Community Development to invite parents to February's Learning Walk. This was an especially bold step because many of the invited parents had a less than amiable relationship with the school and now, these parents were being invited into the classrooms to provide feedback. As a result of the school's initiative, parents received a better understanding of the educational process. The parents who attended the Learning Walk were honored that Mrs. Hicks actually took action due to their feedback. For Brook Avenue Elementary, it was a great opportunity to hear from parents on ways to better educate the students. In light of this success, Brook Avenue Elementary decided to continue inviting parents to Learning Walks. The parents are now excited as well as interested in becoming more involved in the educational process. Brook Avenue Elementary's bold step has started turning what was once a dream into reality.

West Avenue Elementary recognized that student's parents were not receiving enough positive comments about their children. They realized that far too often, the parents only hear from the school when their child is in trouble and rarely about anything positive. In order to correct this, West Avenue Elementary took the initiative to compile a list of positive attributes for some of the most challenging students. Then West Avenue Elementary worked with Waco Community Development to recruit two volunteer parents/guardians that would contact parents of West Avenue Elementary students. The volunteers would relate to the parents the positive things their child is doing in school. Andreia Foster, West Avenue Elementary's principal, realized that these phone calls were crucial to strengthening the school's relationship with parents. Principal Foster was also willing to take the necessary steps to turn this dream into reality.

Our neighborhood is fortunate to have Brook Avenue Elementary and West Avenue Elementary educating our children, and we look forward to the opportunity to continue working with these schools as we turn dreams into reality.

Construction Update

1400 N. 4th Street



Street of Dreams II



801 N. 15th St



805 N. 15th St



809 N. 15th St



8
1
3
N.15th



817 N. 15th St

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION THANK YOU!



Jacque Walker & Regina Brader
Thank you for volunteering to teach the Homebuyer Education classes at Waco Community Development.



Thank you to the wonderful volunteers who help get our Newsletter ready for the bulk mailing. What would we do without you? You're great!

Understanding and Managing Your Credit Score - Part II

by Darrell Abercrombie

Credit scores look a lot like SAT (Scholastic Achievement) scores, and they range from about 350, which is extremely low, to about 850. These scores are produced by a California based company named Fair Isaac and Company. Fair Isaac does not collect credit information, it is not a credit bureau but it works with all three credit bureaus to take the information they collect and turn it into a credit or FICO score.

These scores pack a powerful punch. In 2003, 25 billion credit decisions were made based on FICO scores alone. These were not just decisions about whether applicants would be approved for a new credit card; they also determined:

- *How much applicants could borrow
 - *What interest rate they would pay
 - *Qualification of credit line increase
 - *Qualification to rent an apartment
 - *Whether they could get a cell phone
 - *Qualification for cash advance
 - *Whether they could get credit card they were pre-approved for
- How much will you have to pay for homeowner as well as auto insurance?

Insurers have discovered that how and whether you pay your bills is more indicative of the number of claims you will file than your driving record.

Whether or not you get hired for a particular job? Employers are not allowed to look at credit scores, but in situations in which you will be asked to handle a cash drawer, they often look at credit reports for signs of financial trouble. It probably is not a good idea to put a person in front of a drawer full of cash when they have a stack of delinquent bills.

Your score is a really powerful piece of information. Since it is a snapshot of your borrowing and bill-paying behavior over time (usually the last 24 months), you have the power to change it for the better as time goes by. As you do this, you will be able to swap some of your higher-rate credit card debts, mortgages and auto loans for lower rates. That will not only save you money but will enable you to pay back the money you owe much faster and cheaper.

By the Numbers

Housing:

New Homeowners	62
New Homes:	28
Renovated:	10

Opportunities:

Counseled:	696
Active:	86

Maintenance:

Volunteers:	2,885
Vol. Hours:	17,084
Lots Mowed:	909

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On February 7, 2008 Mike Stone was presented with a generous donation from Wal-Mart. Presenting the donation to Mike is Tim Seargant and Rick Hughes. Wal-Mart donates \$10 for every 25 hours of service. Tim Seargant has worked 25 volunteer hours for Waco Community Development.



1624 Colcord Ave.
Waco, TX 76707

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