

# Waco Community Development

*"We're revitalizing neighborhoods."*

November 2008



254-235-7358

1624 Colcord Ave.

www.WacoCDC.org

## A Time For "Thanks" Giving!

During this time of year, we reflect on all of the reasons to be thankful. At Waco Community Development, we are thankful for the volunteer service groups that came this last summer from all over Texas and the United States. These volunteer groups came to help with Waco Community Development's Neighborhood Projects that are made possible by funding from The Home Depot. The groups consisted of youth groups from several different church denominations, camp groups, Boy Scouts of America, AmeriCorps and others.

Waco Community Development would like to take this opportunity to say, "**THANK YOU!**" Summer projects are no easy task. Preparations for the projects start long before the group jumps in the van to head to Waco. After researching organizations that host visiting work groups, the tedious task of fundraising begins. With enough money raised, arrangements must be made for chaperons, transportation, lodging, food and supplies. Of course, all those wishing to participate in the project must sign permission forms. Once the long list of preparations is completed, the group still has to come to Waco and work in 100 degree weather! These groups helped revitalize our community by helping to restore neighborhood houses like the home pictured below.

"**THANK YOU**" to the volunteer work groups that came to help Waco Community Development continue our mission of restoring and revitalizing our neighborhood:

Camp Tejas - Giddings, TX  
Harris Creek Baptist - Waco, TX  
South Oak Baptist - Arlington, TX  
Faith Promise - Knoxville, TN  
First Baptist Church Waco - Waco, TX  
Church of the Redeemer - Memphis, TN  
AmeriCorps - Waco, TX

First Baptist Church - Dover, AR  
Texas Christian Academy - Waco, TX  
First Evangelical Free - Austin, TX  
Trinity Baptist Church - Willow Park, TX  
Cypress Creek Christian Church - Spring, TX  
Joplin District Nazarene - Neodesha, KS  
Waco Baptist Academy - Waco, TX



BEFORE



DURING



AFTER

## Calendar

### Ways to Get Involved

**\*2009 Homebuyer Education**  
**Homebuyer Education I.**  
**6-8 PM for 6 weeks**  
First Class / Thurs. January 8th  
To register call (254) 235-7358.  
Classes are free!

**\*January 17, 2009**  
**Homebuyer Education II.**  
Saturday, January 17, 2008  
Call the office to register.  
Classes are free.

**\*December 11, 2008**  
Waco Community Development  
Board of Directors meeting.

**The Heart of Texas Housing Finance Corporation recognized Waco Community Development by nominating it for a Texas Association of Low Income Housing Finance Association (TALHFA) award for the new houses on North 15th Street.**

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Issue 21 - 2008

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

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### **Board of Directors:**

**Ken Cooper, President**

**Carolina Ramos, VP**

**Tim Holtkamp, Secretary**

**Jon Spelman, Treasurer**

**Melvin Carter**

**Juan Castellano**

**Billy H. Davis Jr.**

**Walt Keeler**

**Ada Nun**

**Rev. Steve Ramsdell**

**Bill Shirley**

**Dr. Gaynor Yancey**

## **INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS: AN INCENTIVE TO SAVE**

By Claudia Olivas-Meza

November 1, 2008 marked the one year anniversary of Waco Community Development administering the Individual Development Account (IDA) Program. During this time, the IDA program helped 29 families purchase their first home.

The IDA program provides a substantial monetary incentive for individuals to participate in financial literacy training and save towards the purchase of a home within Waco City limits. For every \$1 a participant saves, the IDA program matches it with \$2. The maximum amount that will be matched is \$1,000. For example, if a person saves \$1,000, then they receive \$2,000 for a total of \$3,000 towards the purchase of their home. In order to qualify, the person's income can not exceed 80% of Waco's median income (\$40,300 for a family of four), and they must purchase a home within the Waco City limits.

The IDA program is an amazing opportunity to move towards homeownership and investing in your future. If you are interested in this program please come by our office.

Waco Community Development would like to thank the following entities for helping first-time homebuyers access the IDA program and reach their goal of homeownership: City of Waco Housing and Community Development Services, Waco Habitat for Humanity, NeighborWorks Waco and EDC Homes.

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### **"Economic Recession? How about a Spiritual Recession?"**

by Darrell Abercrombie

A recession is a significant decline in economic activity spread across the economy, lasting more than a few months. Recessions are the result of falling demand and may be associated with falling prices (deflation), or sharply rising prices (inflation) or a combination of rising prices and stagnant economic growth (stagflation). A severe or prolonged recession is referred to as an economic depression.

Many churches have been in spiritual recessions for well over 2,000 years. It makes no difference whether your church is big or small, old or new. What makes a difference is if people are making transformational changes in their life. The Apostle Paul stated, "Don't be pressed into the World's mold, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will" (Romans 12:2).

We need to help people see the Savior so that He can transform their life. Remember, they will not come, they must be brought. They cannot teach, they must be taught. If every soul would save a soul, then every soul would be saved. Then the church would grow because transformational change starts from the inside and works its way outside. Once this starts to happen, you would not see a spiritual recession, but people would grow in their faith and live it out where they work and live.

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## BROOK AVENUE PARENTS: FINDING THEIR VOICE by Walker Moore

Tuesday night, October 14, the cafeteria of Brook Avenue Elementary was electric with energy. The PTA meeting had ended 15 minutes before, yet the room was still full of parents – white, brown, and black - excitedly talking with each other. They knew that they had just been a part of something special, and they wanted to revel in the moment. This “moment” did not materialize overnight; instead it was the result of a group of committed parents and a school working together to ensure the excellent education of the students.

In March of 2008, a small group of Hispanic parents began meeting to discuss ways to strengthen Brook Avenue Elementary. They wanted to work with the school to find ways to have better communication with teachers, safer dismissal procedures, bilingual PTA meetings, and a bilingual computer class to help parents develop computer skills. After this group prepared their agenda they had a meeting with principal Jessica Hicks, and they discovered that she was willing to listen to their ideas and take action on them. Out of this meeting came new dismissal procedures, a summer long bilingual parent/student computer class, and a commitment to make PTA meetings more accessible for Spanish speaking parents.

When the school year began, this same group began meeting again. With success under their belt, they realized that more parents needed to be engaged in this process. They realized that *all* parents of *all* races needed to be involved. Out of this desire to see parents of all races involved, this group began to plan a PTA meeting that would be parent led. There would be discussion in both English and Spanish about ways for the school to be strengthened and for parents to be more involved with the school. A seemingly simple task, except that this had never been done at Brook Avenue Elementary and these parents had never facilitated discussion groups.

Brook Avenue Elementary identified white and black parents who could lead the English speaking discussion groups. On the day before the PTA meeting, eight of these parents came together for facilitator training. They were understandably nervous, but at the same time, they were excited to be a part of a process that was bringing people from all races and languages together for the purpose of strengthening the school.

The night before the PTA meeting, the Spanish speaking parents met together for their facilitator training. Quite frankly, they were scared. In fact, one mom said that she had been having nightmares about the meeting for several nights and would probably have another one that night. Even with their fear, they were intent on making this meeting take place because they were committed to bringing the whole school together.

So the day arrived and questions abounded. Would the facilitators show up? How would it go? Would there be an explosion of negativity? Would the parents participate? More importantly, how would the parents handle leading the discussion? Would they freeze? Would they step up to the plate? There was no need to worry. Yes, the parents were anxious. One parent's hands shook the entire time she facilitated, but they faced their fears and facilitated a meaningful dialogue about the school.

At the end of the night, the school was a better place. Teachers and parents had a newfound respect for each other, and an English speaking group had formed to work with the Spanish speaking group to get even more parents involved.

The night was electric with energy because parents and the school had come together. As one parent put it, “We have found our voice,” and the school had found valuable allies.

### The Dirty Hands of the Kingdom

by Jeff Gravens



In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus prays for the Kingdom to come to earth. On Saturday and Monday mornings I get a small glimpse of the Kingdom taking place. Redeveloping a neighborhood is Kingdom work. Picking up trash, mowing grass and clearing brush. It is *ALL* Kingdom work. I get to bring the Kingdom to our community, shoulder to shoulder, with a diverse group of people. A majority of these people are not volunteering by choice, but by court order. Yet, that merely adds to the Kingdom aspect of the work. Saturdays and Mondays bring together people from many walks of life, all for the betterment of our community. Over the last two months we have cleaned, cleared and mowed over 70 properties. That means we have brought Kingdom to our Neighborhood in 70 different ways! May we all have the dirty hands of the Kingdom.

“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” Luke 6:10

**UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

1110 N. 15th St.  
\$81,000

1100 N. 15th St.  
\$81,000

1105 N. 14th St.  
\$81,000

1400 N. 4th St.  
\$155,000

726 N. 13th St.  
\$80,000

**FOR SALE**

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## Fabulous Fun at the Neighborhood Fall Festival

On Friday, October 31st neighbors and friends had a great time on North 15th St. bobbing for apples, grocery cart racing, tossing bean bags, steer roping and just having an all around great time.

There were hot dogs, popcorn, candy and lots of other goodies to eat too. It was a great way to celebrate the new season and get to know everyone in the neighborhood.

The event was sponsored and organized by Mission Waco with neighbors and local organizations joining in on the fun.

### Highlights of The Evening



## By the Numbers

### Housing:

New Homeowners	83
New Homes:	28
Renovated:	9

### Opportunities:

Counseled:	786
Active:	93

### Maintenance:

Volunteers:	3,786
Vol. Hours:	20,612
Lots Mowed:	1,060

### \*THANK YOU\*

Waco Community Development would like to thank The Home Depot for the generous grant given to our organization. Your grant helped to support our summer Neighborhood Projects and continues to support neighborhood revitalization throughout the year. Home Depot exemplifies the true meaning of "Community Involvement."

### \*Donations-Pledge Donations-Memorials-Honorariums\*

Waco Community Development now offers you the ability to support our ministry through the giving of donations. Your generous donation, pledge donation, memorial or honorarium allows us to continue our mission of revitalizing and restoring one of Waco's oldest historical neighborhoods.

### \*Memorial & Honorary Gifts\*

Your Memorial or Honorary acknowledgment will be placed in the latest issue of the Waco Community Development Newsletter.



### CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to M.L.Dickey, Waco Community Development's Construction Manager, upon receiving the Texas Association of Builders 2008 Ted Scholssmon Lifetime Achievement Award.



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Waco, TX 76707

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### Issue 22 - 2008

#### Newsletter from Waco Community Development.

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