

Waco Community Development

"We're revitalizing neighborhoods."

April 2010



INSPIRATION

by Walker Moore

Inspiration comes in an instant. Last year inspiration struck Jessica Hicks, principal at Brook Avenue Elementary, and me at the same time. We were at the 2009 Greater Waco Education Summit, listening to Donna Beegle speak. During her talk, she mentioned the importance of teachers and parents building strong personal relationships. At that moment, inspiration struck. Jessica turned to me and said "we need to have parent/teacher conferences," and I quickly agreed.

That spark of inspiration led to a series of meetings to plan three days of jam-packed parent/teacher conferences for parents of 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students. During those three February days, 96 parents/guardians, representing 81% of the students, came for a parent/teacher conference. The school office was packed with parents as they waited for their time. Relationships were formed and strengthened, and education was improved.

At the same time, Maurice Walker, 5th grade teacher at West



Parents at one of the local elementary schools

Avenue Elementary, also had a spark of inspiration. He decided that he wanted to meet all the parents of the students in his class. So we worked together to reach those parents, and we succeeded. Then Andreia Foster, principal at West Avenue Elementary, and her 4th grade teachers had the same spark. As I am writing, we are in the midst of scheduling times for next week's 4th grade parent/teacher conferences.

All of this inspiration came in an instant, but the hard work was turning that idea into action. This community is fortunate to have two schools that are inspired, schools that work to put inspiration into action.

We would like to Thank the Bernard and Audre Rapoport Foundation for the grant given for the Parental Engagement Project

❖CALENDAR❖

***2010 Homebuyer Education**
Homebuyer Education I
6-8 PM for 6 weeks
Begins Thursday, April 29th
To register call (254) 235-7358.
Classes are free!

***Homebuyer Education II**
Saturday, April 17th, 1-6 PM
Call the office to register.
Classes are free.

Waco Community Development
Board of Directors Meeting
*Wednesday, April 14, 2010

5th Annual Golf Scramble
April 29th
Cottonwood Creek
12:00 lunch
1:00 tee off

World Changers Waco
July 12-17th

Board of Directors:

Tim Holtkamp, President
Carolina Ramos, VP
Melvin Carter
Juan Castellano
Ken Cooper
Ada Nun
Rev. Steve Ramsdell
Bill Shirley
Jon Spelman
Dr. Gaynor Yancey



Issue 30 - 2010

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

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Don't Leave it on the Table

by **Gabriela Gatlin**

Have you ever heard the saying "Don't leave any money on the table"?

Unfortunately, there are some homeowners in Waco who are doing just that. They are leaving money on the table because they have not filed their homestead exemption, costing them several hundred dollars a year.

Each year Waco Community Development searches the McLennan County Appraisal District database to identify homeowners in our neighborhood who have not filed a homestead exemption. We send them a letter about the homestead exemption, along with the exemption form.

This year, in our neighborhood alone, we found 41 homeowners who may be able to apply for a homestead exemption. We sent them the letter and exemption form, and we hope they will save themselves some money by sending the completed form to the McLennan County Appraisal District.

The same thing may apply to you. So take a look at <http://www.mclennanad.org> and make sure that you have filed. The filing process opens in January and closes in April. If you have any questions give us a call at 235-7358.

Don't leave the money on the table....put it in your pocket.

From the Inside Out

By **Anastasia Collier**

This semester, Waco Community Development intern, Anastasia Collier, distributed surveys to 80 residents of Parkside Village and the Villages apartment complexes. Each complex was randomly surveyed. 40 Parkside Village residents and 40 Villages residents completed the surveys. The following is a small portion of the data gathered from Villages' residents.

Ninety-five percent of Villages' residents feel safe in their apartment complex during the



day and 79.5% of residents feel safe after dark. An overwhelming percentage of Villages' residents, 74.3%, feel it is safe for children to play outside.

The research was created to understand residents' perception of crime, maintenance, management, police involvement, and criminal activity.



SAVE THE DATE

Thursday, April 29, 2010

Waco Community Development's

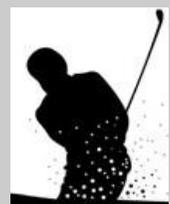
5th Annual Golf Scramble.

Cottonwood Creek Golf Course

12:00 Lunch & 1:00 Tee-off

Early bird: \$70.00 per person & \$75 at the door

Call (254) 235-7358 for information



It's Never too Late to Rebuild

by Darrell Abercrombie

In 586 B.C. the Holy City of Jerusalem was destroyed. The Temple was torn down. The gates were ripped from their hinges, and the walls were burned and reduced to rubble..

Nehemiah was a faithful layman, who left his job in the king's palace and returned to Jerusalem, to begin rebuilding the city. This rebuilding process can be applied to our lives today. We need to rebuild our emotional, relational, vocational, and spiritual walls that have been broken or torn down.

First, like Nehemiah, we need to honestly evaluate our situation. Nehemiah assessed the situation and knew he needed to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. Think about what you want to do. Sometimes, it appears to be more difficult to rebuild than simply starting over. That is why so many people just quit when life gets tough. .

During the process of rebuilding, habits need to be broken and hearts need to be healed. Anyone who has rebuilt a marriage or a church understands what I am saying.

Whether we are rebuilding a life, marriage or a business, the most difficult and challenging part of any journey of change is the beginning, starting out right. This is true on any journey: dieting, exercising, studying or rebuilding a broken relationship.

Many of us never rebuild because we never get around to making an honest evaluation of our own circumstances or situation. We never admit our need. We never confess that some of our walls are broken. We need courage to face our problems, and wisdom and strength to overcome our problems.

Nehemiah next evaluated the needs of the people. What he saw broke his heart. He put everything else aside and sat down and wept. You can never begin to rebuild until you weep over your ruins.

We live in a culture that thinks crying is for the weak; a culture where the primary objective appears to be obtaining health, wealth and happiness. Nehemiah saw beyond those surface level desires. His concern was not simply for the welfare of the people, but for the Glory of God. He fasted, mourned and wept for days. He empathized with the needs of the people, and lived with their burden for four months before he started rebuilding.

Rebuilding is not easy. It can be emotionally and physically draining, but it must be done. Those who endeavor to rebuild have similar characteristics.

- * They surround themselves with people who have a desire to do what God has led them to do.
- * They carefully analyze their situation.
- * They start with a goal in mind.
- * They take responsibility for their actions.
- * They move out of their comfort zone.
- * They seize their opportunities.
- * Finally, they motivate people around them to help rebuild their life.



Donations-Pledge Donations Memorials- Honorariums

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

Waco Community Development would like to thank McDowell's EZPay for processing our payrolls for all of these years. Thank you!!



1624 Colcord Ave.
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*"All the great things are simple, and many can be expressed in a single word: freedom; justice; honor; duty; mercy; hope."
Winston Churchill*

Issue 30 - 2010

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

❖ **TAKING A LOOK AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD** ❖

AVAILABLE PROPERTY



CONSTRUCTION IN PROGRESS



BY THE NUMBERS

Housing:
 New Homeowners: 130
 New Homes: 37
 Renovated: 12

Opportunities:
 Counseled: 1064
 Active: 110

Maintenance:
 Volunteers: 4,328
 Vol. Hours: 23,084
 Lots Mowed: 1,440