

# Waco Community Development

*"We're revitalizing neighborhoods."*

September 2010



In this newsletter we want to articulate Waco Community Development's mission and activities.

Simply put, our mission is to revitalize neighborhoods by promoting housing, community and economic development throughout Waco. Fulfilling this mission requires a multi-pronged strategy that is best described by the acronym, R.E.N.E.W.

- **R**ebuilding older and constructing new single-family homes
- **E**quipping families to become homeowners through homebuyer education and financial literacy classes.
- **N**eighborhood service projects for homeowners
- **E**ncouraging and supporting economic development in the neighborhood.
- **W**orking with community leaders to strengthen their neighborhood

We hope you enjoy reading about our efforts to R.E.N.E.W. neighborhoods.

## Rebuilding older and constructing new single-family homes

"When am I going to get a new neighbor?" the lady asked me as I was walking on one of our neighborhood's 190 vacant lots. I was not sure what she meant, so I asked her to say more. She responded "My name is Ms. Smith. I've lived in this house for years. I've watched your group build all of these new homes in my neighborhood, and I know that when you put a sign on an empty lot that you are going to build a new house. Then I'll get a new neighbor. The new houses and new neighbors are great, and when I saw that you put up the sign I wanted to know 'when am I going to get a new neighbor?'" Ms. Smith's excitement about getting a new neighbor is indicative of the excitement of the change in this neighborhood.

Much of this excitement is created by the homes we have built. To date, we have built 38 new homes and remodeled 13 homes, and we recently sold the fifth "Sullivan" style house, a large 2 story, 2100 square feet, 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath house. The statistics are great, but more important is the sense of change in the neighborhood, a sense of change that fueled Ms. Smith's excitement about a new neighbor.

Rebuilding old homes and constructing new homes is helping achieving our dream of a neighborhood where *"when you walk down the street you see a mixture in size of well maintained homes, neighbors taking care of neighbors and a place that everyone wants to call home."* I look forward to the day when I introduce Ms. Smith to her new neighbor.

### ❖CALENDAR❖

#### Classes

#### \*2010 Financial Literacy

6-8 PM for 6 weeks

Begins Thursday, September 23rd.

#### \*Homebuyer Education II

Next class will began

November 13th

1-6 PM

To register call (254) 235-7358.

Classes are free!

#### Waco Community Development Board of Directors Meeting

\*Thursday, October 14, 2010



Pictures : Michael Bancale, Waco Tribune Herald

### Board of Directors:

Tim Holtkamp, President

Carolina Ramos, VP

Melvin Carter

Juan Castellano

Ken Cooper, Treasurer

Ada Nun

Rev. Steve Ramsdell

Bill Shirley

Jon Spelman

Dr. Gaynor Yancey



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*The Newsletter of Waco  
Community Development, a  
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committed to promoting  
housing, economic, and  
community development  
throughout Waco.*

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## **Equipping families to become homeowners through homebuyer education and financial literacy classes**

By: Darrell Abercrombie

Have you heard the story about a man named Joe McGowan? He was given a farm. He could not pay for it and was being forced to sell it. Just before he sold the farm, some men came to Mr. McGowan and told him they thought there might be oil on the land. They asked for permission to drill. Mr. McGowan readily agreed, and they hit a gusher. It seemed that overnight the destitute farmer became a millionaire.

In reality though, Mr. McGowan became a millionaire the day he received the farm. He just did not know it because he was ignorant of the treasure that resided deep in the heart of his farm. Because of his ignorance Mr. McGowan spent most of his time and energy concentrating on what was visible above the surface, struggling to maintain something that was more than capable of maintaining him.

Far too many of us live our lives like this. Every day we work with individuals who look at their debt and feel as if they could never own a home or never get out of debt. We provide Financial Literacy that will help guide them through debt and credit issues. We also help with debt counseling, so that people can start a saving account versus paying high interest. Hopefully these classes and counseling transition you from renting into a homeowner. The Homebuyer training will help you make better choices for your particular situation and help you maintain your asset so that family members can call their house a home.

Every situation is different, but we can help you to understand that we are more than the problems that we experience. We have to get beyond the surface of life and dig deeper until we accomplish our goal. The writer of Hebrews says, "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." Faith is believing that a thing is so when it is not so, so that it may be so. Mr. McGowan found out that most things are not as bad as they appear. We have to dig beneath the surface, so that we can work on the things that matter and change how we really look at our present situation.

## **Neighborhood service projects for Home Owners**

By: Mike Stone

"It is my favorite week of the summer" said George, one of the World Changers volunteers, as he was ripping off a roof. His "favorite week" was spent sweating in the hot sun while re-roofing a house for a neighborhood family. George was one of 237 people that came from all over the country for a week to help Waco Community Development revitalize our neighborhood. In one week they re-roofed 12 houses, painted 4 houses and built two ramps, with no complaining, just a lot of hammering.

This was a massive project, and many local groups made it possible. I want to thank each and every one of them. We look forward to World Changers coming back next year and focusing their efforts in East Waco.

### **A Special Thanks**

World Changers brought  
**237 volunteers** from all  
across the country:  
North Richland Hills,  
Palestine, Westlake, LA.  
Mill Valley, CA.  
San Antonio, Carrolton,  
Albertville, AL. Athens,  
Alvin, Dilley, Houston.

## Continued Thanks:

Thank you to **Parkview Baptist Church** for allowing the World Changers volunteers to take over your facilities for a week..

### Lunch Providers:

20 different churches from in and around Waco supplied the volunteers lunch.

- First Baptist Robinson
- University Baptist Church
- Bridgeport Fellowship
- First Baptist Church Crawford
- New Zion Baptist Church
- First Baptist Church China Springs



- Colcord Baptist Church
- Brazos Meadows Baptist Church
- Columbus Ave. Baptist Church
- First Baptist Church Woodway
- Grace Community Church



- First Baptist Lorena
- Chua La Vua Vietnamese Baptist Church
- Westwood Baptist Church
- Western Heights Baptist Church
- Bruceville Baptist Church
- Shiloh Baptist Church
- First Baptist Waco
- Kendrick Lane Baptist Church



### Funders:

- City of Waco
- Grande Communication Employees
- Informal group of
- Allergen Employers

### Material Suppliers:

- Foxworth Galbraith
- Kelly Moore Paint
- CES Porta Potties



## **E**ncouraging & supporting economic development in the neighborhood

The excitement and synergy for the economic revitalization of North Waco continues to grow. Local businesses and community groups are hosting a “Better Block Project” on October 30th from 10:00-3:00 pm at North 15th and Colcord. Modeled after a similar event in South Oak Cliff in Dallas, it will be a day of activities for the whole family. Events like this continue to enhance our area and attract both new residents and commercial development.



There will be food from the local restaurants, refreshments from street vendors, activities, music/dance/drama, cultural items for sale, and community booths.

This also links up with Mission Waco’s Jubilee Music Festival hosted by Mission Waco from 3:00 to 5:00pm.

After all of the fun and the music festival, you can try the great local restaurants as they will be staying open later.

Come by and see the changes in North Waco and envision the continuing revitalization of our neighborhood.





1624 Colcord Ave.  
Waco, TX 76707

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## Issue 32 - 2010

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

## Working with community leaders to strengthen their neighborhood

By: Walker Moore

“Dedicated, driven, passionate.” These words describe the parents and teachers of Brook Ave. Elementary and West Ave. Elementary. Four years ago, Waco Community Development realized that “Bricks and Mortar” alone was not enough to revitalize this neighborhood. Out of this realization came the Parental Engagement Project (PEP).

The PEP unites parents and teachers around their children. For example, last year Brook Ave. parents became frustrated with the lack of a PTA. Over this summer, they turned that frustration into productivity and reformed the PTA. Just a few weeks ago, the PTA had a packed house. And before school started, West Ave. teachers met parents in their homes to create a better parent/teacher relationships.

Since its inception in 2008, the PEP has helped create academic success. In fact, this last year both schools received “Recognized” rating, the state’s second highest academic rating.

“Dedicated, driven, passionate.” Those words describe the parents and teachers at these two schools, and we are proud to help support these two great schools.

### BY THE NUMBERS

#### Housing:

Homeowners: 147  
New Homes: 38  
Renovated: 13

#### Opportunities:

Counseled: 1149  
Active: 118

#### Maintenance:

Volunteers: 4,901  
Vol. Hours: 31,442  
Lots Mowed: 1,652