

Waco Community Development

"Helping to inspire and cultivate healthy neighborhoods."

March 2013



It's Time to Celebrate: 20 Years in the Neighborhood

By Alexis Christensen



Celebrating 20 years in the neighborhood is no easy feat but the Brook Oaks Neighborhood Association (BONA) celebrated this landmark on February 20. Formed in 1993 through the leadership of then Mayor Robert Sheehy, the association was

created to foster change. Robert Jackson, current President of Brook Oaks Neighborhood Association, describes the association's purpose quite well. "[It's] a vehicle to bring about change, and give neighborhood residents a voice and decision making power for their own neighborhood and to combat crime, drugs, and a depreciating housing stock." The members have been involved with various projects in the Brook Oaks neighborhood throughout their years of existence; however, one of Mr. Jackson's most memorable accomplishments in the twenty year history was in 1998 when Brook Oaks first won recognition for their involvement with National Night Out. As for the future of the association, the members as well as the leadership see a bright one. "My hope for BONA is to continue to be a driving force for change in North Central Waco. I would also like to see bold new leadership come and take it to the next level," said Mr. Jackson. As we partner together for sustainable change in the neighborhood, we look forward to Brook Oaks Neighborhood Association's impact in the neighborhood over the next twenty years!

Waco Community Development 2013 Office Makeover

By: Gabriela Gatlin



A big "Thank YOU" goes out to Scott Nye for painting trim in the Waco Community Development office. During the quiet month of December, WacoCD staff repainted the walls of our office but were unable to

tackle the trim before the busy hum of our office picked up again in January. Then, one day we got a call from Scott Nye who wanted to volunteer at WacoCD. Scott added the finishing touches to our bright and cheery makeover, and we could not be more thankful. Now we are asking for donations of matching new or used conference chairs to help us take the next step in refreshing our office. We've used our mix-matched chairs well for twelve years, and it is time to give our conference room a fresher look. Could you donate 10 matching conference chairs or do you know of someone who could? Please give us a call.

CALENDAR

Classes

2013 Financial Literacy

6-8 PM for 6 weeks

Next class series

begins June 20th

Homebuyer Education II

Next class will begin

April 20th

1-6 PM

Save the Date

8th Annual Golf Scramble

Will be held at Cottonwood on
April 26, 2013

Hole Sponsorship \$100

Corporate Sponsorship \$500

Come enjoy a day of golf and learn
what Waco CD has been doing this
last year.

Board of Directors:

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Issue 45 - 2013

The newsletter of Waco Community Development whose mission is to help inspire and cultivate healthy neighborhoods throughout Waco.

Uniting Together for Positive Change

By: Ryn Farmer

The past several years, J.H. Hines Elementary has not had an active Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). It wasn't that they didn't want one; rather, no one stepped up to take the lead. Recently, both parents and teachers have expressed a desire to begin the process of bringing the PTA back to life. Last month, several parents approached me on separate occasions and expressed their concern with the absence of a PTA at J.H. Hines. We organized a house meeting where they discussed how to create a PTA with dedicated members who want to work together to continue making J.H. Hines a successful school. We invited the Waco City Council PTA President to the next Family Night and she explained the importance of a PTA and how the parents can begin the process of re-activating it. After her presentation, I overheard a parent say, "I am committed to making sure that this moves forward. We need to work together and get this done." I am excited about the possibilities this brings for the parents and teachers as they unite and use their strengths and abilities to make a difference in the school.



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Sanger Heights Mixer

By: Jose Vallejo



Photo By: Fernando Arryo

On Sunday February 24, Waco Community Development had the opportunity to host this year's first monthly mixer for the Sanger Heights Neighborhood Association. The monthly mixer is an opportunity for members of the association and the community to come together and do something creative. The theme of the mixer was "Story Weaving: Sharing Stories of the Beloved Community." During the mixer we did popcorn storytelling, and everyone around the room had the opportunity to share a story. A variety of stories were told ranging from personal community stories to stories that have impacted the entire community. This was an opportunity to hear stories of hope and transformation happening in the Sanger Heights

Neighborhood. One of my favorite stories was told by a couple who moved into the community in 2000. One day while driving down Colcord they entered into the Sanger Heights Neighborhood. They asked each other, "What neighborhood is this?" After doing some research about the community they fell in love with a house in the heart of North Waco, and after two years they finally bought the home. We also heard from DeShauna Hollie, a long-time resident of North Waco, who shared a poem from her Biking Through My Community series.

My Labyrinth

By: DeShauna Hollie

My labyrinth of
Winding roads
Familiar faces
Old buildings
Lost places
Honking cars
Displaced nature
Common prayers

Making Old Things New

By: Gabriela Gatlin



Growing up in old North Waco homes, I developed affection for creaky stair cases, expansive rooms, high ceilings, oddly designed floor plans, and an endless list of projects. But most of all, I loved the ample front porches. A little over a year ago, I bought my own old house in the neighborhood of Waco Community Development and took on the challenge of turning something old into something new. Now I get to enjoy sharing all my square footage with two groups on a regular basis. My church cluster of Hope Fellowship meets for worship in my house every Sunday morning,

and most Tuesdays my housemate's life group from Antioch Community Church gathers at our home as well. Isn't it normal to host 60 people in your house each week?

Since 2001, Waco Community Development has built 46 homes on some of the 140 vacant lots in our neighborhood. However, building new homes alone is not enough to strengthen the housing market and desirability of Near North Waco; the old homes also need to be made "new" again. In addition to new house construction, Waco Community Development has renovated 16 homes, and at least 37 other homeowners like me have worked on renovating older homes. Emilie Cunningham, one of these neighbors, shares insights from her own experience of renovation.

Why did you choose to renovate an old house?

We inherently like old things, feel like a history comes with it and there's a craftsmanship in the structures' "bones."

What helped make the work of renovation possible?

Flexibility and the enjoyment of integrating old and new. We enjoyed the "hunt" for fixtures and materials that completed the existing structure. Also, Laverty's was indispensable!

Has owning an old house allowed you to do something unique?

Some rooms have exposed brick from the old furnace chimney or the walls have exposed shiplap that was underneath layers of decades of old wallpaper.

A memorable story?

I just remember hours and hours of heat-scraping and sanding layers and layers of paint to restore portions of trim. Broken windows and smashed fingers were commonplace. Also, doing the work yourself makes you attached to the space, less apt to move!

What is the next project on your list?

For our house, we keep finishing out portions of the basement to expand the living space.

Neighbors like the Cunningham's who renovate older homes alongside our newly constructed homes are partnering with us to build healthy neighborhoods that are safe, clean and diverse. We look forward to meeting new neighbors who are ready to take on the challenge of making something old into something new.



World Changers will be in Waco July 8 -12, 2013

This year projects will involve external home repairs such as siding, ramps, stairs, painting. The time to apply is NOW!



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Money Saving Tips for 2013

By: Darrell Abercrombie

Spring is almost here and people are getting their income tax refunds. Many of our customers are trying to figure out what to do with their refund. I have offered them these tips.

1. Pay off your smallest debt first. It sounds easy, but a lot of money these days is going to pay interest on credit cards which makes it difficult to save money for other things throughout the year.
2. Cut back on entertainment bills. There are a lot of inexpensive ways to entertain yourself or your family. With the invention of Hulu.com, Netflix and others, people do not need to spend so much money each month on large subscriptions or going to the movies.
3. Try using cash. Rarely do you see anyone paying with cash, but using cash as your primary method of payment provides a way of seeing how much you really spend. If you don't like carrying large amounts of cash around use a Debit card and keep your receipts to see where and how much you are spending.
4. Make any effort to pay off your car or home early. You can save a significant amount of money if you make additional payments on your car or home loan by applying the extra money strictly to the principle on the loan. Once the loan is paid off, use the extra dollars you save to invest in your future.
5. Choose wisely when buying a car. Gas prices are painfully high. Choosing a car that conserves gas rather than wastes it is a better choice.

The main goal should be to pay off all of your debt so that you can use the money you save for your family and future needs.



BY THE NUMBERS	
Housing:	
Homeowners:	187
New Homes:	46
Renovated:	16
Opportunities:	
Counseled:	1,678
Active:	93
Maintenance:	
Volunteers:	6,124
Vol. Hours:	44,465
Lots Mowed:	2,381