



“Our Stories”

PRESERVING OUR CEDAR/CENTRAL PILLARS

After the turn of the nineteenth century, African Americans migrated to the Central neighborhood from the rural south. Eventually, Central blossomed into a community full with successful businesses and restaurants. It was also home to numerous athletes, artists, musicians, writers, and poets. Unfortunately, many of today's youth, are unaware of the vast and rich history of the city of Cleveland and its neighborhoods. However, there are elders within our communities who lived through and experienced much of Cleveland's African American history.

To bridge the gap between youth and elders in the Central neighborhood and the city of Cleveland, Cleveland State University Professor Dwayne Wright started a program “Our Stories” Preserving OUR Cedar/Central Pillars”. This supplemental education program is designed to engage middle and high school age students in the discovery, preservation, and documentation of history in the African American community. It also helps resolve the intergenerational disconnect between youth and the elders/pillars in Cleveland's neighborhoods. This archival and oral history project preserves the experiences and

stories of elders, who are often referred to as pillars of the community. In exchange for their testimonies and wisdom, the youth in the program beautify the elders' front porches with a fresh coat of paint and floral arrangements free of charge.

This past summer, youth and adult volunteers completed several oral history projects throughout the Central neighborhood. Their third stop was the house of Mr. Calgie on East 35th Street and Central Avenue, where they interviewed him and painted his porch. Then they planted flowers and interviewed Mrs. Lowe who lives on East 70th Street. Mrs. Lowe shared with the youth that her home was a boarding house for visiting actors such as Mantan Moreland and Willie Best, who both were famous minstrel show artists but were not permitted to stay in hotels downtown. From another elder, Mrs. Stowers, students learned that the Friendly Inn Settlement House is a vital institution in the Cedar/Central community, where as a little girl, she learned how to tap dance and play instruments.

If you would like more information about the “Our Stories” program, contact Professor Wright at 216.262.2474.
—Sherita Mullins



“Our Stories” members sitting on Ms. Ruth Turner's porch on E. 36th Street

Professor Wright picking up debris at Lashunda Lee's house on E. 79th Street

“Our Stories” members working at Mrs. Lowe's house on E. 70th Street

Ms. Ruth Turner's house on E. 36th Street

VOTE

Tips about Voting on November 4, 2008

The historic 2008 General Election is approaching quickly and will be on Tuesday, November 4th, from 6:30am through 7:30pm. If you are not registered or have changed your address or name, your registration must be received by the board of elections by October 6th or postmarked at least 30 days before the election. As a registered voter, you may VOTE early in person at the board of elections or cast your ballot on Election Day (November 4th) at your precinct's designated polling place.

Early voting begins September 30th and continues until November 3rd (Monday-Saturday from 8:30AM to 4:30PM) at the Board of Elections at E. 30th and Euclid. All registered voters are eligible to vote early. Early voting is encouraged to avoid the long lines that are very likely to be seen on November 4th.

When you VOTE on Election Day or at the board of elections site during the early vote period, bring a current and valid photo identification (i.e. Ohio driver's license, state ID card, government ID); or a military identification that shows the voter's name; or a copy of a current utility bill (including cell phone bill), bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document that shows the voter's name and current address (including from a public college or university).

If you don't know where to VOTE or would like more information, contact the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections at 216.443.3200, or visit the website <http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us>.

—Sherita Mullins

BBC WELCOMES TWO CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE INTERNS TO STAFF

BBC would like to welcome Tiffany Allen and Ewurafuah Nkrumah to the staff. Both of them will be working with our staff over the next year on a variety of housing repair and supportive social service programs.

Tiffany Allen was raised in Cleveland, spending most her childhood in the Hough area where she currently resides. Tiffany is a graduate student at Case Western Reserve University Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences. She is working on her Master of Science in Social Administration with a focus on Community and Social Development. Tiffany recently obtained her Bachelors of Science in Social Work from Bowling Green State University as well as her license to practice Social Work in the State of Ohio. She has previously volunteered with Catholic Charities in both Cleveland and Toledo Ohio and has worked for various social service agencies in the Greater Cleveland area. Tiffany is excited about being an intern at BBC and plans to make her time here an overall success.

Ewurafuah Nkrumah is originally from Ghana, West Africa and moved to Cleveland, Ohio in 2002. Ewurafuah is a graduate student at Case Western Reserve University Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences. She is pursuing her Master's degree in Social Work with a concentration in Community Development. She is also in the Nonprofit Management Certificate program. She holds an Associate degree in Journalism from the Ghana Institute of Journalism and a B.A. in Journalism and Promotional Communication (Public Relations) from the Cleveland State University. Previously, Ewurafuah has worked as a TV Reporter for Ghana Broadcasting Corporation. Ewurafuah is looking forward to working at BBC and gaining valuable experience from the staff and community.

If you see Tiffany or Ewurafuah out working in the community, be sure to stop and say "hello!" BBC is delighted to have them aboard!

—Sherita Mullins



EAST 73RD STREET RESIDENTS TRIUMPH OVER ABANDONED PROPERTIES CRISIS

On August 1, 2008, residents with the support of BBC, Cleveland Central Weed & Seed, Ward 5 Councilwoman Phyllis Cleveland, and a host of partners celebrated a victory over abandoned properties on East 73rd Street. Over the years, this street became prey to the crisis of abandoned and vacant homes. Residents grew tired of properties being eyesores on the street and havens for criminal activity, so they began a campaign to get the houses torn down. After a year of meetings and a letter writing campaign, five homes were demolished to the delight of many of residents.

East 73rd Street between Central and Cedar Avenues is a part of BBC's Model Block program to strategically help residents make exterior home improvements. Future plans for this street are to start a community park and vegetable garden where adult and young residents could work together to grow fruits and vegetables. Residents are also working with BBC to find funding support to make good use of all the new green space. One resident explained that, "It is like a breath of fresh air not seeing those ugly homes, but seeing a field where there is so much opportunity to do more." Cleveland Central Weed & Seed will assist with the formation of an East 73rd Street block club and elect officers to determine the direction of future projects.

—Orlando Grant



Demolition of 2234 E. 73rd Street on Central Avenue

WEAVING THE SOCIAL FABRIC IN CITY-DESIGNATED MODEL BLOCKS

During the summer, BBC continued to organize residents of its City of Cleveland-designated Model Blocks to empower them to strive for positive change and improvement of their respective areas. The target areas for two of three of BBC's comprehensive efforts are Fuller Avenue between East 93rd Street and Kingsbury Boulevard and Colfax Road between East 68th and 75th Streets.

BBC reinitiated the formation of a block club for Fuller Avenue by visiting residents door-to-door with Ward 5 Councilwoman Phyllis Cleveland. In early September, BBC and a group of ten active residents held a meeting in a resident's driveway to learn about the Model Block program and hear a presentation about safety from Pat Purdy of the City of Cleveland Department of Community Relations. Attendees also completed a questionnaire about the topics they felt should be priorities for the new block club in the coming months.

In July, volunteers from Crossroads Church in Circleville, Ohio, which is located about forty minutes south of Columbus, performed a week of service to Colfax residents. Eight residents who have been active in block club meetings received repairs to their porches. The project was organized in partnership with Lighthouse, Inc., a faith-based organization that has assisted thousands of families in Ward 5 primarily with food and clothing for over twenty-five years through its Heaventrain. The event also received local media attention from WKYC news. To view the news story, please visit the BBC's blog at bbcblog.blogspot.com and check out the July 11 entry, "Ward 5 Volunteer Project Featured on WKYC Channel 3."

With BBC's assistance, a small group of Colfax residents applied for and was awarded a \$3,000 grant from the Cityworks matching grant program of the City of Cleveland. These funds will be utilized for a community clean-up and beautification project to be planned by the block club. Residents also have pursued a Neighborhood Connections grant for security cameras to be mounted along their street.

Colfax meetings during the summer were held in residents' front yards to convey that the community is unified and has a presence on the street. Since January 2008, more than thirty residents attended one or more block club meetings.

Refer to this newsletter's Calendar of Events for meeting locations, times and dates. For more information about the BBC's Model Block initiative, please call Jeffrey Sugalski at 216.341.1455.

—Jeffrey Sugalski



Light House volunteers building a porch on Colfax Ave.



Colfax Model Block Meeting

LIFE ENRICHMENT

The Digital Television Transition

For those who are not aware, on February 17, 2009 all full-power broadcast television stations in the United States will stop broadcasting on analog airwaves and begin broadcasting only in digital. Digital broadcasting will allow stations to offer improved picture and sound quality and additional channels.

Consumers who rely on antennas (including outside antennas and "rabbit ears") to receive over-the-air broadcast signals on TV sets having only analog tuners will need to obtain separate digital-to-analog set-top converter boxes to watch over-the-air TV. Digital-to-analog converter boxes are available in stores that sell electronics equipment and through various online mail order retailers. The cost for a basic converter box is between \$40 and \$70. This is a one-time cost.

Until March 31, 2009, all U.S. households will be eligible to request up to two coupons, worth \$40 each, to be used toward the purchase of up to two, digital-to-analog converter boxes.

• The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) have responsibility for administering the coupon program. (Please note that these coupons will expire 90 days after mailing). For more information, call the Federal Communications Commission at 1.888.225.5322 (TTY: 1.888.835.5322) or visit the website: www.DTV2009.gov.

• Cable and satellite subscribers may need new DTV equipment to view DTV programming in digital format. If you have cable or satellite, you should ask your providers what you will need and when.

—Sherita Mullins



Neighborhood Back-to-School Events "Block Party Style"

On September 6, 2008, the Your Child and Mine program in the Central neighborhood and The Marshall Avenue Block Club in the Kinsman neighborhood celebrated the start of another school year "block party style." With the support of the Cleveland Foundation's Neighborhood Connections grant program, both neighborhood groups were able to provide school supplies, safety information, food, fun, games, and prizes to area residents. Youth are now able to focus on their studies instead of worrying about not having a book bag or school supplies.

BBC serves as fiscal agent for these two groups. If you have good ideas about how to respond to needs in your community or would like more information about neighborhood small grant programs, please call BBC's office at 216.341.1455.

—Sherita Mullins



1.) Marshall Avenue Back-to-School Party
2.) Your Child & Mine Back-to-School Party

FORECLOSURE RESCUE SCAMS

Foreclosures are increasing nationwide, and so are scams that promise to "rescue" homeowners from foreclosure. What these scams do is take your money, ruin your credit record, and wipe out any equity you have in your home.

Foreclosure con artists take advantage of people who have fallen behind on their mortgages and face foreclosure. Con artists know that people in these situations are vulnerable and likely to be desperate. Potential victims are easy to find: mortgage lenders publish notices before foreclosing on homes. After reading such notices, con artists approach their targets in person, by mail, over the telephone, or by e-mail. They advertise their services on websites or publications. They often refer to themselves with titles that sound official, such as "foreclosure consultant" or "mortgage consultant," and market themselves as a "foreclosure service" or "foreclosure rescue agency."

How to protect yourself from scams:

- Only make payments directly to your lender or servicer. Do NOT pay a counselor money. Only pay your lender, AFTER you have a written agreement.

- NEVER sign over your deed. Unless you are selling your house, there is NO reason to sign over your deed to someone else. This will NEVER get you out of foreclosure. It WILL make you lose the house.
- Get promises in writing. Scam artists pretend that they are talking to your lender. Make them show you a written agreement from your lender, before you pay anything
- Do NOT give out personal information. The fact that you are in foreclosure is public information. Some scam artists call just to get your info. DON'T give anyone who calls you ANY personal information.
- Know what you are signing. Scam artists know that people in foreclosure will sign anything if they think it will help. Don't make this mistake! Refuse to sign, unless a counselor can explain it to you.

Your mortgage lender – or any legitimate financial counselor – can help you find real options to avoid foreclosure. If someone offers to negotiate with your lender and offers to arrange to stop or delay foreclosure for a fee, carefully check his or her credentials, reputation, and experience.

For online help, visit: www.dontborrowtroublecc.org. For free foreclosure counseling help, dial 2-1-1 or 216.436.2000.

—Sherita Mullins

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ON THE HORIZON

LOOK TO THE ON THE HORIZON SECTION FOR UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE CITY OF CLEVELAND

FINANCIAL LITERACY SERIES

What is a budget and why is it important? How do I build or repair my credit? What is the process to purchase my first home? How do I protect myself from scams and predatory lending? BBC offers financial fitness workshops throughout the year to answer these questions. If you would like to register or receive more information, call BBC's office at 216.341.1455.

CLEVELAND SAVES' ROLL YOUR CHANGE WEEK

During the week of October 20-25, 2008, Cleveland Saves will be hosting its 6th Annual Roll Your Change Week! The purpose of this weeklong event is to draw attention to the large amount of change in everyone's home and cars, and to increase awareness about saving money. All greater Clevelanders are encouraged to make a deposit of rolled change. During this week, you can go to any participating financial institution, and deposit the rolled change into a Cleveland Savers account or your existing savings account! Also, if you enroll as a Cleveland Saver, you can have access to the no-fee saving accounts offered to Cleveland Savers! For more information you can contact Cleveland Saves at 216.325.7126 or its website at www.ClevelandSaves.org.

SAVE ON UTILITIES THIS WINTER WITH FREE HOME WEATHERIZATION SERVICES

The Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP) is available free of charge to eligible households to help both homeowners and renters to reduce utility bills, make homes more comfortable for occupants, and keep families safe and healthy. HWAP entails a variety of repairs and improvements to heating systems, including the installation of insulation, general tune-up of furnaces, and safety and health testing. Many older homes lack insulation, which keeps heat from escaping homes in the winter and cold air from entering interiors, and vice versa in the summer. Additionally, HWAP contractors ensure that furnaces are working efficiently and are not emitting carbon monoxide, a colorless, odorless gas that can lead to serious health impairments and even death. If necessary, furnaces will be replaced free of charge. To be eligible to participate, applicants' household income cannot exceed about \$15,315 for a one-person household. For each additional member of the household, add \$5,220 to determine the maximum income limit. The program is open to both homeowners and renters. Residents can only receive HWAP services once every ten years. For more information or to request an application, please call Larry LaPrade or Elmore Spain at 216.341-1455. Or, to download and print the application, visit BBC's website at www.bbcdevelopment.org.

For information on any of our various programs, please call us at 216. 341.1455.

Date	Time	EVENT	Location	Address
Oct. 4	8:00 AM	Dr. John T. Carey NEOhio AIDS Walk	University Circle	
Oct. 11	12:00 PM	Ward 5 Club	Vocational Guidance Services	2235 E. 55th Street
Oct. 13		Columbus Day - BBC's office will be open		
Oct. 16	6:00 PM	Fuller Model Block Meeting	Union Library	3463 E. 93rd Street
Oct. 20-25		Cleveland Saves' Roll Your Change Week	Various Locations	
Oct. 22	7PM-8:30PM	Fourth District Police Comm. Relations Meeting	Covenant Baptist Church	E. 119th Street and Kinsman Road
Oct. 28	7:00 PM	Third District Police Comm. Relations Meeting	Cleveland Division of Police Comm. Relations Unit	2001 Payne Avenue
Oct. 28	6:00 PM	Kinsman-Union Association Mtg.	Union Library	3463 E. 93rd Street
Nov. 4	6:30AM - 7:30PM	General Election	designated polling location	check ward or precinct
Nov. 8	12:00 PM	Ward 5 Club	Vocational Guidance Services	2235 E. 55th Street
Nov. 11		Veterans Day - BBC's office will be open		
Nov. 11	6:00 PM	Colfax Model Block Meeting	Bridgeport Place	7201 Kinsman Road, Suite 104
Nov. 25	7:00 PM	Third District Police Comm. Relations Meeting	Cleveland Division of Police Comm. Relations Unit	2001 Payne Avenue
Nov. 26	6:00 PM	Kinsman-Union Association Mtg.	Union Library	3463 E. 93rd St.
Nov. 26	7PM-8:30PM	Fourth District Police Comm. Relations Meeting	Covenant Baptist Church	E. 119th Street and Kinsman Road
Nov. 27		Thanksgiving - BBC Closed		
Dec. 9	6:00 PM	Colfax Model Block Meeting	Bridgeport Place	7201 Kinsman Road, Suite 104
Dec. 13	12:00 PM	Ward 5 Club Christmas Party	Vocational Guidance Services	2235 E. 55th Street
Dec. 18	6:00 PM	Fuller Model Block Meeting	Union Library	3463 E. 93rd Street
Dec. 24		Christmas Eve (Observed) -BBC Closed		
Dec. 25		Christmas Day - BBC Closed		
Dec. 31		New Year's Eve (Observed) - BBC Closed		

CURRENT EVENTS

If you would like to submit an event to our Current Events calendar, please contact Joy Johnson at BBC, (216) 341-1455. Please call Councilwoman Cleveland's office to confirm all community meetings (216) 664-2309.

Thank You

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