

Northside News

January 2014

A print-link for neighborhoods of change

Vol. IV Issue 3

Making Our Community Stronger

Community and School Involvement

By: Esphur Foster

This letter was submitted by longtime Northside Resident and respected community teacher Esphur Foster. Foster discusses her involvement at Northside Elementary.

Good Day Neighbors:

Let me begin with this verse from the "Good" book, "Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it" - Proverbs 22:6.

On 07 November 2013, I had the honor and pleasure of sharing memories about growing up in "Pottersfield", renamed Northside! Ms. Elizabeth Symons, 3rd grade teacher and her students and Mes. Karen Turner and Sarah Moore, 5th grade teachers and their students invited me to their classrooms to talk and answer their questions.

Never have I been so touched and gratified as I was as I looked out on their beaming faces. They were quite respectful, friendly, attentive, and polite. At the end of my talks, they asked great questions which was a marvelous indication to me that they had heard everything that I said.

On yesterday, 21 November 2013 I received a large manila envelope from Ms. Moore and the students filled with handwritten "thank you" and beautiful artwork. Nothing can adequately describe my feelings as I read all the notes.

At one point in my talk I said to them that when I filled out forms that wanted to know my race, I would write the word "human" because there is only one race and we are all "human beings" and I write the word "African-American" as my ethnicity. Much to my delight and surprise, many of the children who wrote to me, that they liked that I wrote "human" race and "human beings" when filling our forms.

They do listen to us and I believe that Proverbs 22:6 will help them remember my philosophy and words about race. The Northside Navigators' community is alive with energy and love from the moment you enter the front door of the building and front office, you feel it and witness it!

The children were so adorable and warm and I would like to challenge all my neighbors in Northside to become involved in the "Train up a child in the way he should go" belief.

Respectfully yours,
Esphur E. Foster

The Northside News is NOW Seeking Community Writers and Accepting Local Business Advertisements.

To inquire about becoming a contributor or publicizing your business in the *Northside News* contact Jasmine Farmer at jasmine@jacksoncenter.info.



A Brush With Kindness Home Repair on Janie Alston's Home on Lindsay Street

Repairing Our Homes

By: Kai Schwartz

Part of keeping our neighborhood healthy and happy is having safe and stable homes for neighbors to live in. Weather and time can take their toll on our houses. Many older homes have problems that are deeply affecting residents' lives. Many residents do not have the resources available to make expensive repairs.

State, County, City and independent organizations have services to address these urgent repair needs. However, these resources are often hard to find. It can be difficult to apply for these resources because of gaps in services, long wait lists, confusing applications, and an overall shortage of money.

Habitat for Humanity's Brush with Kindness program has positively impacted these issues. We are grateful that Brush with Kindness has already helped 6 homes in our area. Mrs. Janie Alston's home had repairs done that made her stairwell safer and allowed her to meet home insurance requirements.

The fire department had declared Mrs. Velma Perry's back door and stairs a safety hazard. A Brush with Kindness repaired her doorway and stairs so she could stay in her home. A Brush with Kindness also did repairs that prevented her heating system from breaking. This was important because it is obviously dangerous to live in a home with no heat in the winter.

A Brush with Kindness has been an important first step in bringing outside attention to the housing repair problems here in Northside. Here at the Jackson Center, we are trying to learn more about the critical repair needs of residents. We would like to use information about the most common home repair problems to help us find what other services exist.

If your home has a health or safety repair need, we would appreciate you giving us a call to educate us about local home repair needs.

We're Making

Art

By: Allison Harrison

Mornings

for my grandmother, Dorothy Spivey, 1919-2005

Mama cuts a cantaloupe, scoops the slimy seeds, scalps the rind, slices again. The kitchen air swells with sweet musk. Her hands are still sticky wet when she plunks down two bowls brimming with melon, banana, blueberries.

She hollers toward the hall: *Ellen, time for breakfast!* Thick bacon strips crisp up on grease-lined paper towels; steam rises as she stirs the grits. She cracks two shells and the eggs slide and sizzle onto the cast iron.

As the egg whites whiten, Mama pries the wax off the strawberry jam she jarred last summer. Then she scoops and flips the pristine eggs in the pan without breaking the yolks or her stride.

Ellen shuffles in. *Did you finish your lessons?* Ellen nods sleepily. Mama hands her a plate of grits, eggs, bacon, toast, and a cup of coffee.

Every morning it's like this--
I sip pulpy orange juice from a jelly jar,
Ellen gulps her coffee,
and Mama hums her favorite hymn
as she wipes the counter of crumbs and grits.

She always hums, but never sings
until she is back in her bedroom,
changing from her housecoat to her work dress:

*Sing them over again to me—
beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of
life...*

ASK KEITH

Ms. Keith Edwards is a lifetime resident of McDade Street and lifelong advocate for the community. Keith is widely known as a fighter for justice and receives calls from neighbors asking her about programs and referrals for help with household and community issues. To submit questions for "Ask Keith," call the Jackson Center at (919) 960-1670 or email us at contact@jacksoncenter.info.



Dear Keith,

What can we each be doing to further strengthen the community?

I think the main thing we are lacking as a community is getting to know each other. The families that have been here for generations are pretty close and we all know each other, but we don't know any of the new families. It's important for us to get to know each other, especially people who are planning to stay for a while.

Whenever we need students, we have a strong connection with UNC where we can get together with students anywhere. UNC always reaches out to us. But we need to also get to know the new families, not so much the people that only plan to be here for a few months, but ones that are planning to start a new life here. That's how we will grow as a community. That is when we can all come together and say, "this is what we want." We are one in the same, we can help each other, we can help each other's children.

When I go out, I see babies in strollers, people jogging, folks sitting out on their porch. Even if I don't know them, I speak. But I think we have to do more than just speak. We need to introduce ourselves. Get involved with what's going on in our community. Get involved with empowerment meetings, community watch meetings, and the Jackson Center.

We have this brand new elementary school in our neighborhood. We have a chance to make that school the best that it can be because our community has a reflection on that school. It needs our unity in order for it to succeed. So it's up to us to come together and get to know our neighbors to make this community grow. If you're not getting anything from your community, you're just floating along. We need to stand together; we need connection.

Community Board

- Birthdays In January: If we missed yours or someone else, call us to submit birthdays so we can make sure to remember them for the future.
 - o Hudson Vaughan- January 7th
 - o Harold Foster- January 8th
 - o Deidre Farrar- January 9th
 - o Lilian Alston- January 14th
 - o Clarence Farrar- January 21st
 - o Jordan Amir Foushee- January 29th
 - o (Turning two years old)

- We lost two important parts of our community, Lois Burnette (94) who lived on N. Graham St. and Dolores Ferrington (74) who lived on N. Roberson St.
- A Brush with Kindness finished a home repair on Velma Perry's home on Lindsay St. so that she can move back in when she is ready.

Submit your community posts to the Jackson Center: 1-2 sentences recognizing individuals or significant events in the life of our community.

Posts for February's Issue must be submitted by Feb. 12.

This Valentine's Day: Order a Song-a-Gram!

What can be better than a beautiful song and a sweet gift delivered to a special person of your choosing, at work or at home on Valentine's Day? And for it to benefit a neighborhood organization?

On Valentine's Day, the Jackson Center's musical star (seriously!) will be delivering "song-a-grams" (song and rose/chocolate) to any person or group of your choosing in the neighborhood for \$25 or somewhere else in Orange County for \$40! Please contact the Jackson Center for more information, and act quickly—a limited number of slots are available!