



Holy Cross Neighborhood Association Newsletter

Established in 1981

Holy Cross Neighborhood Association – P.O. BOX 3417 New Orleans, LA 70177
 Website: www.helpholycross.org Email: sustainthe9@gmail.com

News from the Lower Ninth Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development



A Project of Holy Cross Neighborhood Association

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday 10AM-4PM

Physical Location: 5130 Chartres Street, New Orleans, LA 70117 Back of Greater Little Zion M.B.C.

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Elizabeth Grashoff Blaise, age 85, passed away at Our Lady of Wisdom Healthcare Center on April 30, 2009 after a long illness. Beloved wife of the late Charles Henry Blaise, Jr.; Daughter of the late George and Elizabeth Grashoff. Loving mother of Elizabeth Blaise Durham (Dennis), devoted grandmother to Colleen Durham, step grandmother to Derek and Dennis Durham, Jr. Aunt to Robert Held (Kathy) and Barbara Held. Survived by numerous grandnieces and nephews, great grandnieces and nephew. She was a lifelong resident of the Lower 9th Ward until 2005. She was a graduate of Holy Angels high school. Employers included Morton Salt Company and the Safety Council of New Orleans. She was a founding member of the New Orleans Lettering Arts Association, an accomplished calligrapher and a gifted artist. She was also active in the Holy Cross Neighborhood Association which her husband co-founded. After the death of her husband, she took over as salesperson for NOLA Candle Company and Doerries International. She will be missed by all who knew her for her generous spirit, her gentle soul, her desire to accomplish anything and to make the world a better place...from the times-picayune

Mrs. Blaise worked for many years to make our neighborhood the best place in the city to live. She was born and raised in Holy Cross and was the fifth generation of her family to live here. The Grashoffs were truck farmers. Ms. Blaise edited the monthly newsletter and held several offices in the association including Chairperson of the Board, Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary. She was a wonderful friend, a great intellect, a person of unshakeable faith and a great champion of our community and all its people. She is sorely missed.

CSED Annual Report

ANNUAL REPORT/CSED

ADMINISTRATIVE

Continuing presence and exceptional performance of office manager, Warrenetta Banks and sustainability program coordinator, Kathy Muse. Hire and exceptional performance of 2 resilience managers, Bernadette Carriere and Seth Siegel, sustainability outreach program associate (Avodah), David Eber, MIT fellow Anna Brand and 2 summer interns, Alex Kaplan and Nathalie Jolivert along with incredible support and commitment from the 2008-2009 board and all our partners. CSED provided community access to resources, enabling full civic engagement, working programs and projects and is dedicated to the sustainable restoration of the Lower Ninth Ward and its citizenry.

More than 1,500 volunteers identified, oriented and deployed for CSED operations and initiatives including newsletter, outreach, recruitment, sustainable rebuilding, training, , sampling, analysis and assessment., restorative rebuilding and the regeneration of Bayou Bienvenue, our land and landscape.

Storage and distribution system operating and fully functional to allocate sustainable materials to Lower Ninth Ward residents

Many contacts with key funders and technical advisors for wetlands restoration, sustainable building materials, green building, development

Operation of fully functional revolving fund to joint purchase sustainable building materials

Ongoing development of proposals for funding aspects of wetlands restoration, sustainable building materials, green building, planning and development

Sustainable, resilient regeneration of our families & community

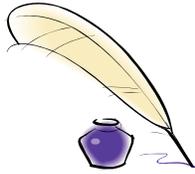
Provided volunteer and/or material assistance at 75 homes

- Recruited and deployed more than 1,000 volunteers to assist in installation of sustainable building materials and upgrade of Holy Cross and Lower 9th Ward homes.
- Ongoing collaboration with government towards restoration of Lower Nine.
- Ongoing support and developing alternative assistance strategies for elderly and disabled homeowners
- Ongoing support, community and neighborhood participation in design/build, recruitment, permitting, advocacy for Global Green Project
- Ongoing collaboration, support, workshops with sustainable architects, technologies and Lower 9th Ward community based organizations for the Make It Right Initiative.
- Ongoing work on communal alternative technology initiatives including solar, alternative sewer systems, geothermal, and gasification
- “Sister city/community” collaborations and assessments with Cairo Illinois, the Carrollton neighborhood and Raceland, Louisiana.
- Ongoing collaboration with Parks and Parkways, additional earth friendly ngos, academic institutions and Winn-Dixie to “retree” and landscape Holy Cross and Lower Ninth Ward
- Ongoing Collaboration with “The Lower 9th Ward Village” towards providing sustainable building materials to the community
- Facilitated completion of platform at Bayou Bienvenue triangle
- Ongoing strategic community planning and advocacy towards restoration of Bayou Bienvenue.

CSED Annual Report Cont'd

- Development and preliminary implementation of economic development, community and “progress tours” around community regeneration
- Ongoing professional analysis of New Orleans section Bayou Bienvenue
- Planning, preparation of papers regarding Lower Ninth Ward sustainability campaign in context of international human rights struggles.
- Continuing connections with governmental leaders (inside and outside Louisiana) responsible for Louisiana recovery
- Ongoing work on the closure of MRGO
- Ongoing engagement to reassess and realign water-related projects
- Ongoing work with Corps Reform Network, Tulane Environmental Law Clinic, Gulf Restoration Network
- Ongoing development of campaigns for presentation to the community for Carbon and Climate Neutrality and Environmental Justice
- Development and preliminary implementation of campaign for energy equity
- Ongoing monthly newsletter
- Ongoing Facilitation of renewal of city funded care for Delery St. playground
- Implementation of Emerging Green Builders 2-week event
- Workshops on Energy Efficiency/Green Building/Historic Preservation
- Ongoing Planning for the Holy Cross School Site
- Recruiting responsible, sustainable development to the community.
- Provided access to “quality of life” sustaining resources for Lower 9th Ward residents
- Ongoing development of “green market” in Lower 9
- Initial implementation of the St. Claude Initiatives
- Ongoing support of Rebuilding Together, Operation Comeback efforts
- Helping to keep Lower 9 in the limelight

Many, many thanks to our Technical and Community Partners including. University of Wisconsin Nelson Institute, University of Colorado School of Architecture, LSU School of Landscape Architecture, Lafayette College, University of Southern Illinois, MIT, Tulane Institute on Water Policy & Research, Tulane/Xavier Bio-Environmental Research Center, the Sierra Club, Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, the Louisiana Bucket Brigade, US Green Building Council, EDF, Corps Reform Network, NWF, Global Green, Make it Right, Preservation Trades Network, REACH-NOLA, LANO, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Resource Center, Environmental Defense, National Wildlife Federation, the Lower Ninth Ward Stakeholders Coalition, LowerNinthWard.org, the New Orleans Institute, Neighborhood Partnership Network and many others. Lower Ninth Ward Village is a primary partner and a vehicle for engaging the whole community



That's All Folks

Dear Friends,

I sincerely hope this letter finds you and your families well.

Well, it is so hard to believe that my term as your president now comes to end. Of course, like anything, it has been two years mixed with good and bad. But, I can indeed say beyond a doubt that it's been two years full of more good than anything. The past two years have brought me a lot closer to you as friends and neighbors. We have struggled with spikes in neighborhood crime and we have celebrated our community through the acclaimed Prospect 1 art exhibition. We have expressed over and over about the need for governmental funding to repair infrastructure in our community. And, we are currently underway with our local government and other partners to establish a national center for healthy communities in our very own neighborhood. We have had a yearlong project focused on helping our residents become more prepared for emergencies and more savvy at water management in our community. And, we still work hard to press the Army Corps of Engineers and the federal government to provide us with the necessary category 5-hurricane/flood protection. Through all of this work and more, there has not been one dull moment in our work and community. We have had our share of disagreements and celebrations. We have shed tears of joy and pain along with much laughter in between. And, I could not have asked for a better community of friends and neighbors with which to share in all of it.

Friends, you have taught me a lot about myself and all of us. I know there have been times when I might have offended you. And, I sincerely beg forgiveness. But, more importantly, I hope I have served you well. It has been my honor to work with you and for you as your president. I thank all of you for believing in me and supporting me during my tenure. And, while my term comes to an end, I will still be very much involved in our community's work. Know that you can always call on me for any help. Please understand that I will take some much needed time for my family and myself. But, know that I am only a phone call or email message away from you.

Lastly, but certainly not least, I wish to give special thanks to our vice-president (Bill Waiters), board chair (Pamela Dashiell) and all officers and members of our neighborhood association for working with me over the last two years. No matter where I am in my life and in this world in the most obscure of moments, I will think about and cherish each and every one of you and thank God for the overall experience. God bless you and God bless the Lower 9!

*Sincerely,
Charles*

From Complete Strangers to Friends

Some things in the lives of New Orleanians are inevitable...effortless. It's a given that each and every year, we'll celebrate Mardi Gras. We'll deal with the weather changing from cool to scorching hot. However, when it comes to rebuilding our once flooded community, it's just the opposite. In this rebuilding process, nothing is inevitable. Nothing is effortless. Each and every step of the process thus far has required hard work from the neighbors, families, friends, but most importantly - volunteers.

Through volunteering, complete strangers from all parts of the country have transformed into our friends. Teachers, lawyers, doctors, students, housewives, spring breakers, architects, soccer moms, professors, retirees, administrators, carpenters, rabbis and congregations from nearly every denomination have selflessly come to our aid. They've gutted homes, hung sheetrock, prepped homes to be painted, cleaned debris, hung shelves, planted trees, worked in gardens, and painted homes and so much more to help our new and returning resilient home owners in the Lower 9th Ward. They've given time, money, love. But most of all they've given us hope.

They are our special volunteers. They continue to bring so much of themselves to help us and they vow to bring others along with them. We can't pay them but we sure can thank them as we see them working in our community. So next time you're traveling in the neighborhood and you see a volunteer, take a few moments to thank them. Certainly if it had not been for our volunteers we would not be as far along with the rebuilding of our Lower 9th Ward Holy Cross Community.

Grateful Lower 9 Resident,

Warrenetta C. Banks

Where would we be without our volunteers?



Volunteers from: Temple De Hirsch De Sinani, Bellevue WA, Sierra Club, City Year, Gwynedd-Mercy College
 Historic Green Builders, Temple Sinani of Chicago, Michael Bakeley, Howard University
 Tom Peterson of Cheltenham, PA
 Stephen Strahs of Melrose Park, PA
 Temple Shaaray Tefila Women's Mission, NY
 Kentucky State University
 Patti Vile, Volunteer Expeditions of Greater Chicago, Temple Sinai, Rochester, NY.
 Temple Emanu-el of Westfield, NJ
 Temple Chai of Long Grove, IL
 Redeemer Presbyterian Church Volunteers from: Richmond, VA, Lake Forest, CA, Cranston, RI, Raleigh, NC, Providence, RI, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Student Hurricane Network, Boston College Law School, University of Southern California, Chicago Kent College of Law, Temple University, Beasley School of Law, Duke University, and so many others.

Historic Green's 2009 Spring Greening event was a huge success!

At least 450 volunteers joined us for a total of 1200+ volunteer days, providing at LEAST \$500,000 in construction services to the neighborhood. These diverse groups from all around the USA and Canada worked on a startling array of meaningful projects, which were identified and detailed with help from the Holy Cross Neighborhood Association and CSED to do the most good. Information submitted by Jeremy Knoll, pictures were taken by Ariane Wiltse

Historic Green accomplished more than 30 separate projects throughout the 9th Ward. All together, the 11-day event had a drastic positive impact on:

- 20 homes (6 PRC Operation Comeback and 14 owner-occupied)
- 8 or more small businesses on both sides of Saint Claude
- restored the front of the All-Soul's Church facing the market
- continued restoration of the Delery Street playground
- constructed 10 rain gardens for homeowners and at the Delery Street playground
- built and organized a library in the Village (children and adults)
- Multiple upgrades at the Lower 9th Ward Village
- delivered 30 trees
- built several raised-bed veggie gardens
- provided numerous curb improvements all along St. Claude
- helped to install radiant barriers in about 10 homes
- improved pathways, seating, and signage at the bayou platform
- provided dozens of education events, demonstrations, and workshops open to both residents and volunteers!



Garden Committee News

During the months of March and early April, over 175 trees were planted in the Lower Ninth Ward through a project sponsored by Winn-Dixie/Nature's Grilling Products. The project was coordinated by resident Jenga Mwendo, chief organizer of the Backyard Gardener's Network and co-founder of the Lower Ninth Ward Urban Farming Coalition (www.lowernineurbanfarming.org), and served approximately 90 Lower Ninth Ward residents.



Left: The crew posing after planting a citrus tree for Ms. Pashenia Thomas on Chartres Street.



Right: Jenga Mwendo, Azana Olusola, Juba Mwendo and Ms. Pashenia Thomas



Left: Two gracious volunteers Planting a tree for resident Derek Ratcliff on Lizardi Street

Upcoming Events

- **Where's your Neighbor?**, Saturday, May 16th, 1-4 PM
Lower 9th Ward Village 1001 Charbonnet
Free Food, Music, Services for Seniors and people with disabilities for more information contact: GNO Fair Housing Action Center (504)596-2100.
- **Amerifest** , A free event for the City of New Orleans Community. Join us for a special day of full FUN and challenges for K-8 students. Basketball, Baseball, Soccer, Arts, Crafts, and Music. Saturday, May 16th, Bonart Playground 1200 Lizardi Street. 10:30 – 11:00 Registration. 4:00 Pick-Up. Free food for registered students. Contact: Andrew Ryan (316)518-2796.
- **Women On Assignment, Inc. Honoree Program** – Saturday, May 23rd at 4:00 PM at Light City Ministries, 6107 St. Claude Avenue. This event is open to the public. The Honorees are: Mr. Willie Pugh, Mr. Henry Irvin, Mrs. June Sanchez, Mrs. Althea Haywood, Rev. Lois Dejean, and Laverne Jamison. For more information contact: Glenda Jones Harris, Event Coordinator @ (504)810-0008 OR gjonesharris57@yahoo.com
- **Sankofa Market**, June 13th 10 am-3:00 PM 5500 St. Claude Avenue.
- **HCNA June Meetings**: Thursday, June 11th and Thursday, June 25th at 5:30 PM.
- **The “King’s Community Garden”** Summer Program will engage approximately 20 students, from 6th and 7th grades. As a new addition to the MLK Charter School’s annual Summer Science Academy, this program will be held June 1-June 30, 2009, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday to Friday. Contact Justin Mack at jmack7458@yahoo.com for more information.



Please keep the family of Reverend Olander Cassimere, Sr., 79 and his wife, Alphathade Cassimere, 77 in your prayers. The elderly couple was found murdered in their Gentilly home on Mother’s Day. Reverend Cassimere served as Pastor of the Third Church of God in Christ in the Lower 9th Ward. His wife often sang solos before his sermons. Funeral arrangements have not been confirmed. If you have any information about this crime please report it to Crimestoppers the reward has been increased to \$11,000.

Community Rebuilding Information

- Total Community Action, Inc. Low income Home Energy Assistance Program call (504)324-8609 for an appointment.
- St. Jude Community Center Furniture Bank- Selling used Furniture (5 pieces for \$175 each additional piece \$35. Contact Kevin – (919)345-8516. 3248 Chippewa Street. Saturdays 9am-5pm
- ACORN (504)943-0044
- Rebuilding Together – Helping low income Senior Citizens age 62, and or Disabled, and First Responders in Holy Cross Historic District. Pick up an application @ the CSED office.
- “Get It Done” Community Meeting most Monday’s 5:30 pm at the Greater Little Zion Baptist Church, 5130 Chartres Street. Please contact David Ebert of the L9 CSED office at (504)307-5498 for upcoming meetings.
- All Congregations Together (504)304-2281
- Cynthia Willard-Lewis, Council Woman District E (504)658-1050
- Common Ground Relief (504)304-9097
- Free legal Clinic (504)717-7324
- CGR Media Collective (504)583-0750
- The Meg Perry Healthy Soil Project (504)913-5635
- Common Wetlands (504)442-2314
- Lowernine.org (504)278-1240
- Lower 9th Ward Clinic (504)309-0918
- Lower 9th Ward Homeowners Assn. (229)269-9017
- Lower 9th Ward Neighborhood Council (504)261-2768
- Lower 9th Ward Village (504)402-4284
- Lower 9th Ward NENA (504)373-6483
- New Life Intracoastal CDC (504)606-2603
- Green Light New Orleans (504)324-2429 or www.greenlightneworleans.org free CFL bulbs installed
- Historic District Landmarks Commission (504)658-7040
- Debris Removal 311
- Make It Right (504)620-3213
- NORA Lot Next Door Program (504)658-4400
- Code Enforcement 658-4300
- Jeff of All Trades (504)329-4204
- City Home Ownership Program (504)5533
- Louisiana United Methodist Southeast Disaster Recovery Ministry (504)248-7558
- Red Cross – (800)814-1477
- Catholic Charities (Free Exterior Painting) (504)281-7230
- General help rebuilding (504)895-5439
- Drug Enforcement Administration (504)840-1100
- 5th District Police Officer LaCabe (504)5513

Special Thanks to Major Kelly and the 5th District Police Department for coming out to our meeting and addressing the recent crimes in our neighborhood. Please feel free to accompany Jeffery Chambliss and Ariane Wiltse Chairpersons of the Crime committee to the NONPAC meetings the 2nd Wednesday of each month @ 7:00 PM in the old Universal Building at St. Claude and St. Roch Street.

Decisions From High Authority

Recently LSU announced the money, authority, and decision to build a major health center with the VA in lower Mid City. This would be an economic engine and break-through leap for a world-class medical and research industry. We could see the lines of builders and contractors waiting in the wings, ready to convert a marginal neighborhood into positive growth. The concept was endorsed by cash-starved New Orleans through its City Council with no delay.

So what then was the problem?

The proposal received immediate criticism from constituencies that had not been consulted about the deal, and who objected to both the plan and the process of decision.

Many were fed up with the delay in getting a public hospital back up almost four years after Katrina. Many thought, and proved, that old art nouveau Charity could be redone for a fraction of the cost and time of a new one. Many were outraged that decision-makers laid claim to too much of the city with a suburban scheme that took down a neighborhood and its houses on spec. Some were just tired of the same old top-down money centered decisions that cut through the cherished urban fabric with crude knives and little sense or sensibility. Some folks plain don't like the arrogance of authority used arbitrarily.

Downtown a similar scenario is taking place that hasn't yet received much media attention. The Corps of Engineers is attempting to dig by force a MR-GO-type deeper industrial canal and new lock, for speculated growth to the Port by ignoring real trends, and despite risk and hardship for everyone else. The \$1.3 billion project shows little regard for community health, safety, or consent. Corps hearings have been just show, with widespread community opposition merely noted. The City Council is too mesmerized by the Port and big money projects to stand up for its neighborhoods or perceive the insanity that invites in more of the sea.

Where do we go now?

It is government with tax dollars that attempts to bypass public debate over Charity and over the Lock Project. All, particularly elected officials, might reflect that the power to govern comes only from one source, the consent of the governed.

Arguments over authority have brought impasse. We are ALL vested by claim and right in these public decisions. What we need are creative and inclusive solutions. If we are to move forward, it is apparent we must move together. This does not mean moving slowly. Nothing is as slow, or contentious, as quick plans by isolated authorities that ignore vital public interests.

John Koefel

Holy Cross Neighborhood Association

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**For \$10 a month you can
advertise your business in
our newsletter**

Warrenetta Banks,
Editor
warrenettab@yahoo.com

About the Holy Cross Neighborhood Association

Established in 1981, the mission of the Holy Cross Neighborhood Association is to make our community the best place in the city to live and raise a family. Elections are held on the 2nd Thursday in May. Membership dues must be current by the end of April each year or the member will not be able to vote or participate in the May election. The association meets every 2nd and 4th Thursday night from 5:30pm – 7:00pm @ The Greater Little Zion Missionary Baptist Church, 5130 Chartres Street. Annual membership dues are \$10.00 T-Shirt included.

Charles E. Allen, III,
President
William Waiters, Vice President
Linda Novak, Corresponding Secretary
Elois Parker, Recording Secretary
Evelyn Stanley, Treasurer
Pam Dashiell, Past President

Holy Cross Neighborhood Association Crime Committee

Mission Statement

To facilitate an alliance between Lower Ninth Ward residents, community partners and public officials that fosters a safe, just and healthy community. In spirit of activism, resiliency and compassion that characterizes our neighborhood, the crime committee is dedicated to encouraging residents and partners to participate in both crime prevention and intervention for the betterment of our diverse and historic neighborhood.

Jeffery Chambliss & Ariane Wiltse, Committee Organizers
Please report all crime to the NOPD's 5th district at:
(504)658-6050. Report Drug activity to the FBI:
(504)813-3000, DEA (504)840-1100

The Board of Directors 2008/2009 is as follows:

Antoinette Ackerson
Charles E. Allen, III
Calvin Alexander
Beverly Boulet
Jeffery Chambliss
Pam Dashiell
Charles Digrange
Elois Parker
Linda Novak
Rev. Gilbert Scie
Evelyn Stanley
Mary Patsy Story
Ann Schnexyder
William Waiters

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