



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.

Looking around our great community near the fourth anniversary of the federal levee breaks and destruction of our neighborhoods from the river to the bayou in the Holy Cross and Lower Ninth Ward neighborhoods, there is much to take pride in, much to be thankful for, much to despair, much to hope for and everything to keep us in action.

PRIDE: From Sister St. to Delery St., from Douglass St. to Florida Avenue, against all odds, predictions, inaction, bureaucracies, incompetence, ill will and on and on and on, WE ARE BACK, WE ARE REBUILDING RIGHT, WE ARE ON THE MAP.

As families return, as we come together to confront what divides us and celebrate what unites us, as our churches, nonprofits, community based organizations, businesses and most importantly, our people, we grow stronger as we deal with the day to day realities of living on the frontier. We all get better at what we have to do.

We know our neighborhoods are vulnerable to the water and we are working to make that water a resource. We know that current protections are inadequate; we are rebuilding higher, stronger, better, working for enhanced natural protections (restoration of Bayou Bienvenue) and for effective built protections and infrastructure. We know most of our neighbors are not back and that there's been no concerted, effective effort to help them return. We're finding them ourselves and person to person, organization to organization, family to family, doing everything in our power to help our former residents make informed decisions. We continue advocating for ourselves at every level.

DESPAIR: The loss of life, family, community and infrastructure caused by the (levee federal) breaks our hearts, but moves us to action.

ACTION: Citizens are the best agents of their own recovery and progress. We have an unprecedented opportunity to remake our systems, the way we relate and the way we are governed. Please, get engaged, get involved, get informed, vote, love your neighbor and Sustain the Nine!

THANKS: To the people, institutions, churches, synagogues, organizations, businesses, corporations, academics, technicians, volunteers and workers from all over the world who continue to be generous with so many resources and who help make the Holy Cross and Lower Ninth Ward neighborhoods the most exciting (place), stimulating place in the world to live and work.



4th Anniversary of
Hurricanes Katrina and
Rita

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The Vice President's Report

Dear Holy Cross Friends and Neighbors,

When I was elected to be the new Vice President of the HCNA, I knew I faced a massive task: throwing great parties to bring us all together! To that end, I set out to make this year's Fourth of July Party a success. And then I quickly grew overwhelmed. Throwing a party for hundreds of people is no small task! Lucky for me, I had the help of so many friends and neighbors that all I had to do was make a few phone calls and then show up to enjoy myself. I hope you all were able to attend and enjoyed yourselves, too. If you did, you have yourself and your wonderful community to thank, along with the following folks:

Thanks to Bill Waiters, Andrew Robinson, and Simon Hand for cooking up a feast. The HCNA and CSED provided burgers (veggie burgers, too!), hot dogs, sausages, chicken (with Bill's homemade BBQ sauce), and grilled salmon. All this was accompanied by a spread of sides and desserts that I thought we'd never get through. (Oh, but we did!) Thanks to everyone who cooked and shared with us!

Thank you, Summer, the brand new Holy Cross resident who provided us with perfect Fourth of July music to relax to! What a treat!

Thank you, Southern Eagle the Budweiser distribution company that supplied ten cases of cold beer and a beautiful red, white, and blue sign to welcome all in attendance. Thanks go out to Linda Novak, too, for securing this generous donation.

Thank you to the New Orleans Sheriff's Department for providing and setting up the tent that kept us cool(er) in the hot July sun. Thanks, Warrenetta Banks for making the calls that got the tent there.

Thank you, River Parish Disposal, for donating two port-o-lets! We've never had this at a party before. What a relief! (Pun intended.) Thanks, too, to Andrew Robinson for securing this kind donation.

Thank you to all of the Holy Cross and Lower Ninth Ward community leaders who spread the word and came out to share in the good feelings.

And finally, THANK YOU TO ALL OF YOU who attended the party! It was such a wonderful event, and seeing so many Holy Cross and Lower Nine residents come together reminded me that we are not only recovering, we are very much vibrant and full of love and life. What a way to kick off a vice presidency! I can't wait to do more for my wonderful community...

Big love,

Sarah DeBacher

Holy Cross Neighborhood Association

Newly elected Board 2009 - 2011.



WILLIAM WAITERS, PRESIDENT
SARAH DEBACHER, VICE PRESIDENT
EVELYN STANLEY, TREASURER
ELOIS PARKER, RECORDING SECRETARY
LINDA NOVAK, CORRESPONDING SECRETARY (NOT PICTURED)
CHARLES E. ALLEN III, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

ANTOINETTE ACKERSON
CALVIN ALEXANDER
JEFFERY CHAMBLISS
SIMON HAND
JOHN KOEFERL
JENGA MWENDO
ANDREW ROBINSON
REV. GILBERT SCIE
MARY PATSY STORY

Garden Committee News

The latest news for the Garden Committee is that Mr. Pete Ellis has taken the lead in clearing out the Ernst Garden and planting for the fall. Anyone who's interested in planting at the garden or helping out in any way should contact Jenga Mwendo at (504) 994-7745.

The development of the Guerrilla Garden on Chartres and Charbonnet is progressing. The Guerrilla Garden will be a beautiful green space with ample seating, shade, and garden beds for planting. We've recently obtained a 6-month lease from New Orleans Redevelopment Authority, the property owner. We're working towards getting ownership through donation or a 10-year lease. Our core group of neighbors, including Mack from The Village and Mr. Aloyd Edinburgh, as well as waves of volunteers have been working consistently to clear the lot and keep the weeds down. Supporters of the garden include The Lower Ninth Ward Village, the Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development, New Orleans Food and Farm Network, and Parkway Partners. We are looking for more support in the form of material donations.

Anyone interested in planting at the Guerrilla Garden or the Ernst Garden or participating in any way should contact Jenga Mwendo at (504) 994-7745.

Below: L9 Garden Tour - May 23



Turner talks about what's growing at the School At Blair Grocery (potatoes grow in tires in background)

Tour goes peruse the herb garden at Common Ground



Inside Common Ground's greenhouse



Demo Work At Holy Cross School Site

By Charles Allen

As you all have come to notice over the last two months, there has been enormous demolition work happening at the old Holy Cross School site. Well, here is a brief update on the latest regarding the old school site. Plans are still underway to develop a very worthwhile project at the old site called the National Center for



Community Health and Research (NCCHR). This center would help bring to life all the many desires of our community to truly become a strong, sustainable community. Activities at the center would include but are not limited to research, community education, community meeting space, as well as light retail. And, as we all asked for in the recent master planning process for this campus, there would also be housing for residents.

Presently, the center is waiting on word from the National Institute of Health regarding a multi-million dollar grant application that was submitted over two months ago. In the coming weeks, we will feature presentations at our HCNA meetings from those who have been instrumental in this developing project. Stay tuned! We see this as our community's economic stimulus package.

Upcoming Events

- Hoop Night - Every Saturday Night at Sam Bonart Park. Corner of Marais and Forstall. Pickup games for youths are held every Saturday from 4p.m. to 7 p.m. rain or shine. Adult volunteers as well as several officers from the 5th District come out to play ball and coach the kids. Officer Ceaser even gets the kids doing push ups and jumping jacks in between games. It is our hope that by bringing youth and police officers together on the basketball court - a safe and neutral ground - that we can begin to rebuild strained relations between the police and the community. (For those of you from New Orleans, we are attempting to bring back the Officer Friendly program.)

- Saturday, August 15th Bayou Restoration Community meeting, MLK School, 1617 Caffin Street. 12:30pm Lunch, 1-1:30 pm Panel Discussion. For more information contact Jason Funk with the Environmental Defense Fund @ jfunk@edf.org or 202-573-3388. Free lunch will be provided by Holmes One Stop

- 4th Annual Memorial Tribute Open to the public to honor the Victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Ceremony on Saturday, August 29, 2009. Prayer Service Beginning at 9:00 a.m. Wreath Laying at 9:38 a.m. At the Memorial on North Claiborne Avenue and Tennessee Street. This event is sponsored by Council Woman Cynthia Willard Lewis of District E

- Saturday, August 29th at 11:30 a.m. Mayor Nagin will have a Progress Event at the levee breach.

- Beginning at 1:00 p.m. Sunday, August 30th a Memorial Service will be held at North Claiborne Avenue and Tennessee Street. This event is sponsored by the Lower 9th Ward Neighborhood Council, Inc. Vera Mc Fadden President.

The Environment in August, Part I

August threatened to rain on us more than it actually did, so it was pleasant enough outside those times the sun wasn't directly beating down. But other things were happening that kept our association busy. Here are some of the things that came up about the Corps and the environment, all of which you are sure to hear more about in coming months.

First, at the July 27 about-to-be-August meeting, there was unanimous consent of the HCNA membership to sue the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the way they ignored the risks to public safety and environment when they approved their own supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) on the lock project. It was an arbitrary process they put us through, but we are on the record, and we are right to be defending ourselves. We are grateful for the Tulane Environmental Law Clinic for this opportunity for justice.

Second, Lolis Elis wrote a front page article about Sun Energy in the Times Picayune that seemed to give them some credibility, but we know we do not want this proposed garbage burning energy plant anywhere near us, if indeed anywhere at all. What we know so far is that the operation to vaporize the garbage brought by hundreds of trucks daily into usable energy has never been done anywhere successfully to any community's satisfaction, and that even prototype operations have had serious problems with pollutants, not to mention the traffic issues. There will assuredly be more as this project attempts to find a spot. It probably won't be New Orleans East, however, where the community leadership has overwhelmingly rejected it.

Third, a permit by Newport Environmental to build a yacht motor factory in the wetlands at the mouth of Bayou Bienvenue (past Paris Road) has been filed with the Corps and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality. The comment period came up very suddenly so president Bill Waiters took action by asking the Tulane Environmental Law Clinic to include HCNA in comments opposing the permit application on the grounds that too little information has been presented, the environmental effects are unknown, and so much is at stake for restoring the wetlands without a further burden of new industrialization. Stay tuned.

Fourth, the MRGO Must Go Coalition held a rally in St. Bernard August 11 to bring people together to discuss what yet needs doing to restore the wetlands of the MRGO.

The Council on Aging Hall was full, and HCNA was well represented. It was clear that everyone values wetlands restoration over levee work as the more permanent solution, and wanted the Corps to get moving with getting this done. It was good for us to meet with our neighbors on this common initiative.

On August 7th HCNA had signed onto a MRGO MUST GO Coalition group letter to the Corps asking that (1) the Corps get moving on this environmental restoration of lands ruined by MRGO, (2) that they do it scientifically, including using studies on storm surge data coming out of recent litigation, (3) that they wait to try to make restoration economically feasible like navigation project, (4) that Coalition leadership be able to meet with the generals in charge to get past any misunderstanding about the nature and urgency of the work.

Fifth, comments were made to the president's Council on Environmental Quality by the deadline for revision of the Corps Principles and Guidelines for Water Resource Development Projects. We said we wanted more consideration for historic waterway structures like the St. Claude Bridge and the Lock and that we wanted a process that brought us into the loop from the very beginning of project design, not just at the end after it was already decided. Separate but equal, still with us.

August was a busy month yet not over.

John Koefler

Community Rebuilding Information

- **Total Community Action, Inc. Low income Home Energy Assistance Program call (504)324-8609 for an appointment. Call (504)218-5282 or (504)218-5505 form the Weatherization Program.**
- **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**
- **Rising Sun Senior Housing, Contact Rev. Jenneford (504)277-4131, (504)650-3544**
- **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)231-5513

What's Been Happening in Our Neighborhood



New Sign at the Bayou Thanks to Andy Baker



Many, many thanks are due to Alex Michelini, CSED's Bard College intern this summer. Alex helped us tremendously, became a part of the fabric of this community over the summer and plans to live in New Orleans after her graduation. Can't wait till she returns.



Tracy Nelson rings the Welcome Home Bell at the HCNA meeting last month.

: Holy Cross Neighborhood Association celebrates the 4th of July on Levee.



The Floating Island Launched In Bayou Bienvenue



On Tuesday, June 23rd, the community participated in the planting and launch of two, 35 square foot floating wetlands provided as a partial donation (50%) by Floating Islands Inc. out of Baton Rouge, LA. The buoyant mats made from a matrix of recycled plastic PET drinking bottles will be planted with three different species of marsh grasses with the help of the community, then floated and anchored 100 feet off the Caffin Avenue platform. Plant material was donated by Bayou Rebirth and Common Ground. Members of the community, University of Wisconsin Madison, University of Colorado, Denver, Holy Cross Neighborhood Association, Lower Ninth Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development, Common Ground Relief, Bayou Rebirth, Sierra Club, Louisiana Green Corps members from Old City Building Center, Tulane Water Policy Center, Tulane Xavier Bioenvironmental Research Center, Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation, The Lower 9th Ward Village, Lower 9th ward residents, Floating Island INC., School at Blair Grocery, students from the Martin Luther King School's Wetland Warrior Program and others were invited to attend. Submitted by: Darryl Malek-Wiley, Regional Representative, Environmental-Justice Organizer, Sierra Club.

Thanks to our Volunteers



Barry Law School Students Worked to Rebuild our Community

Above: Homeowner Ms. Thomas, and volunteers painted several rooms in her home and her front porch



Barry Law School donated several items to the CSED: towels, gloves, garden hose, paint brushes, etc.

Special Thanks to Patti Vile of Volunteer Expeditions.

Below: Homeowner Ms. Soloman and Volunteer Ken Sargent. Ken spent a week volunteering with us



For Organizing and arranging the many Jewish Family volunteers from around the county to help us rebuild our Lower 9th Ward neighborhood New Orleans.

Thanks to the nearly 40,000 Young Lutheran volunteers Last month that help rebuild our city of New Orleans. They cut grass, worked in our Community Garden and painted homes.

CHAMBLISS AUTO
BODY REPAIR
3141 TCHOUPITOULAS
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NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
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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.

**FOR \$10 A MONTH YOU CAN ADVERTISE
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TOO! CONTACT: WARRNETTA BANKS @

WARRENETTAB@YAHOO.COM OR

(504)324-9955

The Board of Directors 2009-2011

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Jeffery Chambliss
Simon Hand
John Koefler
Jenga Mwendu
Andrew Robinson
Rev. Gilbert Scie
Mary Patsy Story

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

Holy Cross Neighborhood Association

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New Orleans, LA 70177

