

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Talented Neighbors & Good Things Happening

in North Port and Newtown

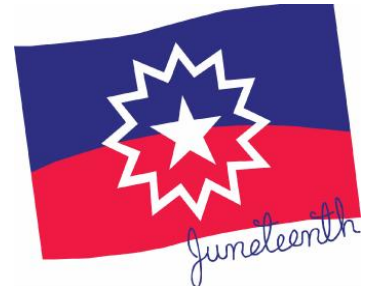


NEWTOWN RESIDENTS CELEBRATE HISTORY, BUILD COMMUNITY AT “JUNETEENTH”

On June 19th, the Newtown community will host a celebration of Juneteenth, an important land-mark In American and African American History that still has relevance today.

Also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day, this day commemorates the announcement of the abolition of slavery in the U.S. State of Texas in 1865 and has become a symbol of the emancipation of all US slaves. Upon hearing the words read by Union General Gordon Granger “in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free,” former slaves in Galveston rejoiced in the streets.

excitement in the air. There had never been a festival of this magnitude held in Newtown.



This year’s celebration will occur along the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. corridor and feature vendors, performances, and a special unveiling of original sculpture honoring the culture and history of Newtown citizens in Fredd “Glossie Atkins” Park. The major sponsors are Amaryllis Park Neighborhood Association, Inc., Newtown Front Porch Council, Inc., the City of Sarasota and Sarasota County Parks and Recreation.

All are welcome to attend. The event is sponsored by Amaryllis Park, Newtown Front Porch, KAPP Productions, Sarasota County and the City of Sarasota. Vendors and Sponsors are also welcomed.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT

www.newtownfrontporch.org/pages/juneteenth.cfm

or contact Josie Brookins, (941) 306-6901 or Mary Mack, (941) 306-6901

2010 Sarasota Juneteenth

“Unveiling Our History”

Saturday, June 19, 2010

Fredd “Glossie” Atkins Park

3 pm – 10 pm



Juneteenth today celebrates African American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures. The first

Juneteenth celebration was held in Sarasota under the leadership of the late Jennifer X (Dixon-Hall) along with Tempo News

and its staff members.

That year the corridor was filled with activity from Osprey Avenue to Washington Court. There was

Talent on the Block:

Zaga Bacic

North Port

Zaga Bacic is multi-talented woman of faith that loves to be among her neighbors in North Port.

A native of Macedonia, Zaga speaks four languages: German, Macedonian, Yugoslavian and English. Before she retired to move to Florida she was a dental technician and lived in the city of Chicago.

Zaga is a musician who loves to play the Mandolin and the keyboard. She learned to play in her church up North. She can cable knit socks and booties. She likes to ride her bicycle with her neighbors. Zaga loves to garden; she has a small one in her back yard. She's well-traveled, regularly visiting Macedonia and Germany for her family.

She's an active member of the church choir at Seventh Day Adventist church in Englewood and also lends her singing talents to her sister church in North Port for the Christmas and Easter holidays. She cares about her family, sharing her faith with others and being connected with her neighbors. Zaga is just one of many who live in North Port who is always eager to share her talents with her community.



Zaga & her garden



Zaga's healthy Tomato plant



*"The more resourceful we are among ourselves,
the more valuable a resource we become to our families,
our communities, and our world."*

Cheryl Honey, Founder of Family Support Network
www.communityweaving.org





CITIZENS COME TOGETHER TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS

North Port

The current economic recession is one of the longest and deepest in U.S history. A record number of people across the country are struggling to make ends meet. **The economic turbulence has had an impact in the city of North Port.**

The number of foreclosures has increased dramatically in the past two years and with it, the number of people with no home.

In response, a group of citizens have come together to make lemonade out of the lemons handed down to them by the Great Recession.

A newly formed homeless committee has been working to combat hunger among the homeless population since late 2009. Made of representatives of different churches and civic organizations, the group exemplifies what can happen when people come together around an issue that they care about and pool their collective talents to make positive changes in the community.

The homeless committee is led by Margie Ducharme, a social worker for the North Port Salvation Army. Before the committee was formed, she witnessed the growing effects of a faltering economy on residents. With the help of other citizens, Margie reached out to residents, civic organizations, and members of faith based communities. A number of people responded not because only because they were asked but because they already acting on the issue and thought it better to pool their efforts.

After weeks of planning, the members in the committee in charge of organizing community meals finally had their first dinner on May 6th at

the Living Waters Lutheran Church. Members of the San Pedro Catholic Church even offered to help members of Living Waters setup tables and serve food. Another church, the Coastal Community Church



Margie Ducharme (top left) and women from the committee in charge of organizing the dinners. Below, members of Living Waters Church during the first community dinner on May 6.

of the Nazarene, working in conjunction of Am Vets Post 312, has offered to cook for three Mondays in May.

The committee is very inclusive; it has people from all walks of life. The only requirement is that they have a desire to be



a part of making a change.

People with disabilities, people who are or used to be homeless are a welcome part of the committee, because they offer a crucial perspective for the entire committee to consider before they make any major decisions.

For example, there has been vigorous discussion of how accessible the dinners could be for people who are physically disabled, elderly, and without transportation. SCAT bus routes on or near the churches where the dinners were being held were identified to make it easier for individuals who wish to come. SCAT buses are also fully equipped to help people with disabilities get around. If those perspectives were not a part of the



thinking during the brainstorming process, people may not have considered utilizing the SCAT bus routes. Members of the committee who are homeless have also volunteered to spread the word about what the committee has been working on to others who are homeless in North Port and to invite them to be a part of the committee.

This is only the beginning. One of the major goals of the committee is to have a network of churches who will serve daily meals to those in the community who need it. **Many in the group have expressed a desire to work toward fixing the root causes of poverty in North Port, such as jobs and affordable housing.** There's no doubt that whatever the group works on, it will thrive as long as the energy, skills, and talents of each contributor are utilized.

BROTHER LANCE: GROWING ECONOMY FROM THE GRASSROOTS

Newtown

Brother Lance, a native of Newtown, is a dynamic business entrepreneur who is well-known in the community for his seafood restaurant, which he ran for years until he leased it out.

With the job economy being at records lows, Newtown residents have been affected by unemployment. So, when Bro. Lance was

approached by several people asking him for work, saying they need help to feed their families or just to pay bills, **he wanted to do something to help his community—and he did.** (see "Bro Lance" on p.5)



You Are Invited:

**NEIGHBORS GATHERING
1st Year Anniversary Picnic
Sun., May 23. 5 pm**

Wouldn't it be great to live in a neighborhood...

- * *Where neighbors know you and your family by first names?*
- * *Where neighbors keep an eye on your children as they play?*
- * *Where, if there is crisis, help is within walking distance?*

This is the vision of the LaFrance Area Neighbors

Gathering, a group of neighbors in North Port who have been rediscovering and rebuilding "community" in their neighborhood one week at a time. They invite the community to celebrate their first year together since starting the group. Location: Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park (6968 Reisterstown Road, North Port, FL 34286.) For more info or to RSVP, contact Don Vande Krol at don@neighborsgathering.com, (941) 423-5444, or visit www.neighborsgathering.com

NEAT STUFF

GOOD Magazine releases

“The Neighborhoods Issue”

Issue 19 of GOOD Magazine explores what it means to be citizens of where we live—and how we can preserve or recapture our unique communities.



**** HIGHLIGHTS ****

You Are Where You Live: What Makes a Perfect Neighborhood? Interview with world-renowned urban thinker Richard Florida about what makes great neighborhoods, why small communities need more political power, and the transformation of American suburbs. Excerpt: *“a neighborhood is not just a set of individuals, but a set of relationships... And the relationships are fluid. ...the places that enable those relationships to form are the places that do better.”*

The LION's Share: Don't Just Buy Local, Invest

“Don't just buy local, invest local: One town's plan to buy stock in their own community.”



Street Scene: Great Neighborhood Street Art

Steve Powers, “Love Letter”
Philadelphia

Powers, who used to tag under the name ESPO, taught a group of Philadelphians the art of sign painting, and then set them loose on 50 walls alongside the city's elevated trains. The signs spell out a love letter between paramours and between the community and the city itself.

www.good.is/post/street-scene-great-neighborhood-street-art



The GOOD Guide to Better Neighborhoods Including “toolkits” such as...

Be a Good Regular



Create a Neighborhood Clubhouse



Meet Your Neighbors without Seeming like a Crazy Person



To read the full issue, look in your local book-store or visit www.good.is/series/neighborhoods-issue

("Bro. Lance" Continued...)

When the old post office building became vacant, Bro. Lance saw an opportunity to create new businesses and employment. He has also formed the Newtown Business Community Association in order to further support economic development among the residents of Newtown. Since the opening of the Newtown Business Center, four businesses are now occupying the building.

Brother Lance shared these words with us about his work and vision:

Why you are doing this? "People need work, not promises. Even if you have to sell hot dogs to make ends meet, for now, you are doing something to help yourself not depending or waiting for the right job to come along.

Purchasing this building and having several business open their doors would be an opportunity for our community's economic development and job opportunities."

Who else is working with you? "Anyone that would like to—I welcome all entrepreneurs."

What is your hope or dream for the community? **"To see Newtown become the vision that our forefather had—to be creating a 'New Town.'"**

What is NBCA? "Newton Business Community Association is an incubator for entrepreneur to get educated, and start their own business with establishes business owners as their mentors."

Newtown Business Center

1932 Martin Luther King Way, Sarasota, FL 34234

Home to Businesses and Organizations

run by Newtown residents: Simon the Food Vendor, Sarasota Millionaires, Phone Mart & Utility Payment Center, Middleton Tax & Accounting Services



Simon the Food Vendor

With a big smile, Simon sells hot dogs, hamburgers and salmon fish sandwiches.

Simon has been working for Lance for more than twelve years. He first met Brother Lance when he was looking for work. Brother Lance gave him some jobs to do and Simon has been working with him since then. He also worked in the restaurant for four years before it was leased out. Simon says, "Lance is a good man. He is my brother."

Simon's dream for Newtown is, **"I would like to see this place continue to grow. There are good people in Newtown that are willing to work hard for what they want."**

Sarasota Millionaires

Minor League Football Team

Formed by husband-and-wife team Bethsaida and Calving Williams, Sarasota Millionaires is an Adult Professional Team that “not only offers their players another chance at playing top quality football, but also opportunities of moving on to play in college as well as the NFL, CFL, Arena II, and NCAA.” A non-profit organization that aims to “instill the values of sportsmanship and teamwork into each player” Millionaires is “dedicated to providing pride and growth in our community.”

The Millionaires goes beyond football: “It’s not just about football for us. We are committed to providing success to our players both on and off the field. The Millionaires participate in weekly



activities called ‘Players Night Out.’ Every week we take a night off from practice to go bowling, out for dinner, the movies, etc. together as a family.”

The players contribute to the community in a variety of ways, including participation in "Family & Friends Day" at various churches, The Martin Luther King Jr Freedom March, reading to elementary students at Emma E. Booker and neighborhood pre-schools, helping with Thanksgiving food basket give-a-ways, mentoring at risk youth in the community.

Web: <http://www.sarasotamillionaires.net>

Email: SarasotaMillionaires@Verizon.net

Right: Founders Bethsaida and Calvin Williams with player

Below: Players At Emma E. Elementary for the FCAT Pep Rally



Middleton Financial Tax & Accounting Services

According to their website, “Middleton Financial helps individuals reduce their tax burdens and their fear of the IRS and specializes in financial consulting and services for startups, small businesses, sole proprietors and individuals as well as Individual and Business Tax filings. If you’re in need of accounting or financial services, please give us a call.” www.middletonfinancialcorp.com (941) 312-6656

Phone Mart & Utility Payment

Center Opened by young entrepreneur Carlos Yancy’s, the center offers residents a location to pay their Simple Mobile and page plus cellular phone bills as well as utility bills.

Thank you for reading!

These stories have been shared by neighbors with SCOPE's Neighborhood Team.



Mary Butler
Newtown



Jenn-Marie Grant, North Port



April Doner
Newtown & North Port

Through our Neighborhoods Initiative, SCOPE supports residents in Sarasota County neighborhoods to work collectively to improve their communities.

We use an asset-based approach to help discover, connect and mobilize existing community capacities so they can be used to address challenges, build local economy, and improve the quality of life for all residents. We believe that in community, everyone has something to offer and there is no one we don't need.

If you share our vision we would love to work with you!

Give us a call at
(941) 365-8751 or
adoner@scopexcel.org



"Connecting and Inspiring citizens to create a better community"

www.scopexcel.org