

Wesley Community Center does NOT give, rent, or sell donor information to businesses or other organizations. Your information is used to keep you informed on Wesley activities, by mail, phone and email. If you prefer NOT to receive such material, please contact Candy Kneip at 713-821-8905

For additional information on becoming a community sponsor through volunteer opportunities or as a donor contact our Community Outreach Manager by email at vgarcia@wesleyhousehouston.org or call 713-821-8907.



WESLEY news

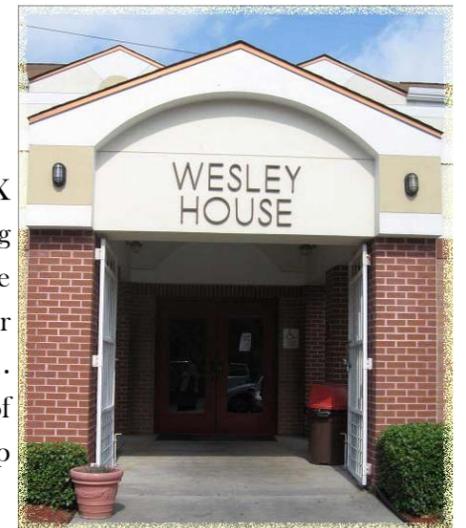


A National Mission Institute of The United Methodist Church

Summer 2012

WESLEY COMMUNITY CENTER

helping people
help themselves
and each other



THIS ISSUE

THE ROOTS OF WESLEY

United Methodist Women -
Focused on our children

NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH

What's happening in the neighborhood?

COMMUNITY

Who are the faces of our community?

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Helping a MISSION, Sharing as a VOLUNTEER

SPIRIT OF HELPING

Benefiting Wesley Community Center and Honoring Bishop Janice Riggle Huie

INSERT

THE CIRCUIT RIDER

Our church connection

Wesley Community Center, Inc. of Houston, TX is a social service agency that has been serving residents of the Near Northside Village neighborhood and the Greater Houston area for 108 years, serving over 110 zip codes in 2011. Our mission is to minister to the needs of individuals and families by "helping people help themselves and each other."

Through our Early Childhood Education Program, Out of School and Youth Programs, Seniors Program, Reba Veal Henderson Food Co-op, Financial Opportunity Center, and Emergency Assistance, we were able to positively affect the lives of over 24,000 individuals last year.

Through the years, Wesley Community Center has dedicated its time and effort to improving the integrity of the Northside Village community of Houston while providing opportunities for personal growth to its residents. Wesley enriches lives with education and character building opportunities; helps families become healthy, happy, and prosperous; and enables economically stressed families to become strong and independent.



Wesley Community Center . 1410 Lee Street . Houston . TX . 77009
www.wesleyhousehouston.org . publications@wesleyhousehouston.org

SAVE THE DATE OCTOBER 4, 2012

Spirit of Helping Luncheon
Honoring
Bishop Janice Riggle Huie
Junior League of Houston

For information about table sponsorship contact: Candy Kneip at 713.223.8131, ext. 231 or reserve your table online at www.papercitymag.blacktle-houston.com/rsvp and enter event code: WCC94

SPIRIT of
HELPING
Benefitting
WESLEY
COMMUNITY CENTER

Honoring
BISHOP JANICE
RIGGLE HUIE



Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.
— Matthew 19:14

United Methodist Women saw a need and created Wesley Community Center

Women of nearby First United Methodist Church of Houston helped found the center in 1904. They saw that many of the women across the bayou were widows with children whose husbands had been killed working the rail yards. Locked into poverty by more than geographical boundaries, the idea of their families having more than food and shelter seemed like a dream.



From the beginning Methodist women focused on children.

A special emphasis of United Methodist Women is children. If children are raised with safety, security, food, shelter, education, and basic human rights, these children will grow to be loving and secure adults. United Methodist Women believe deeply in responding to Jesus' mandate to "care for the least of these." Children often do not have a voice in this world, so United Methodist Women care for them and advocate on their behalf.

WESLEY HOUSE history

1904 Near Northside mission established by Methodist women

1942 Methodist Women's Houston Board of Missions incorporated as a nonprofit

1960 Wesley House dedicated at 1410 Lee Street

1974 Barbara Jordan Day Care Built - Wesley selected to manage Day Care Center

1976 Wesley becomes a United Way agency

1984 After School "Latch Key" program started

1988 Wesley serves homeless population through a grant from Campaign for the Homeless

1991 Reba Veal Henderson Food Cooperative opened

2004 Wesley Celebrates 100 years

2012 Wesley opens Kurtz Education and Recreation center

NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH

What's Happening in the Neighborhood for Youth? Our goals are to build character and enrich the lives of youth and their families through education and activities.

The youth of the Near Northside face overwhelming challenges toward becoming well-adjusted adults, including poverty, substandard education, a lack of available and affordable enrichment opportunities, and a culture that values subsistence work over education.

In addition, the prevalence of drugs, gangs, crime, violence, and teen pregnancy continue to threaten the safety and development of these youth on a daily basis. Their parents are often ill equipped to deal with their academic and behavioral needs due to language barriers and a lack of familiarity with the school system.

Wesley Community Center's program for middle school youth responds to these needs by supporting academic development, enhancing social and personal skills, increasing their community involvement, and providing a safe haven during the after-school hours.

In early 2012, Wesley opened the Kurtz Education and Recreation Center. This 10,000 square foot facility houses a gymnasium, computer lab, and classroom. The center will expand programming that was not previously available. This includes indoor sports and recreational activities such as dance and martial arts. Teens have an area to congregate to meet and talk after school. We also plan to expand opportunities for volunteers to tutor, mentor, and coach.

In addition, after school and all day summer programs will be offered for elementary and middle school children, which will concentrate on three main areas of development: Academic Performance, Healthy Living/Enrichment, and Social Awareness.

The new Kurtz Center will also provide new opportunities for our Early Childhood Education Program. This program strives to enhance cognitive, emotional, and social development among preschoolers who come from low to moderately low-income households. Children are provided a solid foundation for future learning by preparing them to enter public school at or above their peers' level.

Community

The Child. The Youth. The Individual. The Family. The Senior.

THE FACES OF OUR COMMUNITY

Wesley's services provide circle of life programs for children, youth, individuals, families, and seniors in the Near Northside and surrounding areas.



Our **Early Childhood Education Program** strives to enhance cognitive, emotional and social development among preschoolers from low income homes and prepares them to enter the public school system. The **After School/Summer/Youth Program** focuses on academic performance, healthy living, enrichment activities, and social awareness such as decision making and social skills. Wesley's **Adult and Family Services** utilizes case management and individual service plan goals. Families can receive emergency rent and utility assistance as well as connections to other community resources. Our **Senior Services Program** provides a socially stimulating and physically engaging environment including recreation, field trips, hot lunches, social events, physical fitness, and fellowship for neighborhood senior citizens.

To help continue our mission for our community, contact Candy Kneip, Resource Development Director at 713-821-8905 or ckneip@wesleyhousehouston.org. She can discuss our Child Scholarship program and other Giving opportunities.

OUTREACH

Helping a Mission. Sharing as a Volunteer.

The volunteers that come through the community center each year are able to bring enthusiasm, skills, and resources to the organization that are invaluable. We want to make all of our volunteers' experience a meaningful one.

As a Wesley volunteer, you can participate in a variety of projects and activities at our Center. No project or activity is too big or small. You may ask yourself: "Why drive to Wesley just to read a few books I pulled from my child's closet? I want to do something more meaningful." To you, it may be just a few books, but to one of our children, it may be the first time they have had a story read to them, with the love and enthusiasm you can share.

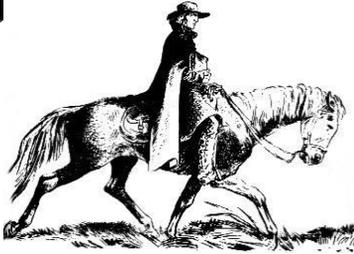
"When was the last time you felt really warm and loved? Think about it. It was probably the last time someone went out of their way to do or say something nice to you - unasked, out of the blue, just because - something that made you feel valued and appreciated. Though you've heard it a thousand times before, the essence of love is giving. Give of yourself and of your time; give surprise gifts and encouraging words. Giving is the spark that ignites the fires of love. You have the power to start a blazing fury of selfless love". - An excerpt from the book Hugs, to encourage and inspire by John William Smith

All of us at Wesley encourage you to share the opportunities available at our Community Center. You could be the arms that carry an aging seniors bag of food during our Food Distribution. Your kind smile and warm heart can bring joy to someone's day.

You can find out what volunteer opportunities are available for individuals, bible study or youth groups by contacting our Community Outreach Manager, Victoria (Vicki) Garcia, at 713-821-8907 or email to vgarcia@wesleyhousehouston.org.



CIRCUIT RIDER



The Circuit Rider, connecting Wesley Community Center to our local churches

WELCOME TO WESLEY

I am very happy to be at Wesley. It is like coming home. As an adolescent, I had some difficult times. Our town had no place for youth to go and no real activities outside of the school. A young Methodist minister saw a need in our community for a place for kids to go at night and on the weekend, to get them off the streets. He opened the basement of the church as a "teen center," and it became my home away from home. I took this opportunity when others did not, and it made all the difference in the world. It is why our new Kurtz Education and Recreation Center is such a gift. It is providing safe sanctuary for the youth in the neighborhood. For some, it is the only safe place they have. We are keeping many seniors in their homes, providing the starting blocks for hundreds of pre-school children, and giving hope to thousands of people who are in crisis every year.

I have spent a great deal of my life in service to those who are in need. It was an opportunity to give back as those who had helped me. With a background in youth development, early childhood and adult education, emergency assistance, and workforce development, Wesley was the perfect place for me. It also has brought me back to my Methodist roots and hands on community mission that is central to the church. Our namesake, John Wesley, stressed a life of Christian holiness: to love God with all one's heart, mind, soul and strength and to love one's neighbor as oneself. Wesley Community Center is doing just that.



Diana Garbis
Executive Director

*Do all the good you can,
by all the means you can,
in all the places you can,
to all the people you can,
as long as you ever can."*

- John Wesley

Scholarships needed for our children

To afford child care, a single parent with two children must make \$35,000 annually or an hourly wage of \$17 an hour (that's more than twice the minimum wage of \$6.55)! The family's largest single expense - larger than the cost of housing - is the cost of child care. (Average monthly expenditure for housing = \$768 compared to childcare = \$918). Subsidies help, but funding continues to shrink for these programs, and more than 8,000 children wait on child care lists every year.



Wesley is committed to providing these critical services. In the Wesley zip code alone, there are over 3,500 children under the age of 5. Reliable child care is important for working parents, and high quality child care is critical to children's development.

This year, we are offering opportunities to "scholarship" (or partially scholarship)

a child. The donor will be able to see the direct impact through reports on the child's progress throughout the year. For \$3,500 per year, a child can receive a year of full time child care that will give them a life changing opportunity and allow their parents a chance to bridge the household income gap.

If you would like to obtain more information, please contact ckneip@wesleyhousehouston.org.

HOST A FOOD DRIVE

Food needed for the Reba Veal Henderson Food Cooperative

Wesley's Food Cooperative feeds Seniors and Families every month and needs your help.

For only \$2.00 a day, you can provide food for a Senior. That is only a donation of \$60 to feed senior for **ONE FULL MONTH!**

For only \$5.00 a day, you can provide food for a Family. That is only a donation of \$150 to feed a family for **ONE FULL MONTH.**

Monetary Donations can be mailed to: 1410 Lee Street, Houston, TX 77009 or you can donate online at www.wesleyhousehouston.org.

You can also consider hosting a food drive. Donations can be dropped off at Wesley on 6/9 and 6/30.

MAKE IT A FAMILY DAY!

Load the kids in the car, run by the grocery store, pick up food & head over to Wesley to drop off!

DROP-OFF DAYS

Reba Veal Henderson Food Cooperative
1235 Lorraine St.

Houston, 77009 (just 3 blocks from Wesley Community Center)

Saturday, June 9th and

Saturday, June 30th

9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

NEW!

We are now accepting **FROZEN FOOD** donations, thanks to our **NEW 72 cubic feet FREEZER!**



FROZEN FOOD ITEMS

5lb. Bag of Leg Quarters, 3-4 lb. Whole Fryers, Ground Beef, Frozen Vegetables, Frozen Can Juices, Frozen Fruits

DRY FOOD ITEMS

Rice & Beans, Crackers, Cereal, Can & Packaged Soups, Macaroni & Cheese, Peanut Butter & Jelly

GIVING BACK to Wesley Community Center



Youth from **St. John's School** volunteered to work with our Seniors Program as part of St. John's 7th grade Days of Giving Program. Mrs. Spain, the groups' Spanish teacher, encouraged students to practice their Spanish by visiting with Wesley seniors and calling out Loteria (Mexican bingo)!

Later in the day, students read personal reflections to their school assembly to highlight the importance of volunteering in the community.



Volunteers came to Wesley in February from **St. Stephen's United Methodist Church and St. Mark's United Methodist Church (Pecore)**.

They spent the day enjoying the beautiful weather, spending time with each other, and even burned off a few calories moving mulch to the pre-school play ground.



The Central South District of the Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church completed a work day at Wesley on March 24th. Volunteers worked at the food co-op, painted the Social Hall, cleaned tables, power washed the playground equipment, and made landscaping improvements.