

Flint Diaspora

“SPREADING THE NEWS ABOUT FLINT”



Mission

“To connect people across boundaries and create channels of action to make Flint, MI a truly great community!”

Flint Club Highlights

Staff Updates

Due to unforeseen medical circumstances, Becky Johns is no longer able to continue her employment with Flint Club. In her short time with the club, Becky contributed immensely to its growth and success and we wish her all the best.

We are pleased to announce the filling of several key positions. Tina Nies is the Membership Coordinator for Flint Club. Please direct member and volunteer related issues to her at support@flintclub.org.

Sonyita Scales-Connor is the new Community Challenge Outreach Liaison for Flint Club. She can be reached at comchallenge@flintclub.org.

We are thrilled to welcome both of them as we look forward to their contributions.

Monthly Meeting

The next Member Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 26 at 6pm. This is your opportunity to provide feedback into our upcoming activities and to talk about how you'd like to make Flint, MI a truly great community.

Flint Club Members in Chicago, Ill

Flint Club – Chicago members recently held an American Idol viewing party. Chi-town members are busy making plans for more Flint Club related activities. If you live in the Chicago area and would like to be a part of the Chicago yahoogroup, please write flintclubchicago-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

March Madness Fundraiser

Congratulations to Andrea Floden, Stephen Oparka, and Teresa Gillotti – winners in the March Madness Fundraiser!

Community Corner

Flint Pride Day

Bring your rakes, brooms, shovels, and other equipment to help plant flowers and clean up Riverbank Park. Meet for coffee and donuts at the surface lot located at Saginaw & Kearsley Streets on Saturday, May 19 at 8:30 a.m. Drop a line to support@flintclub.org if you plan to participate.

Give Back

Join a Flint Club Board Committee

Flint Club has two board committees that regular members can join. The Non-local Network committee is looking for people to assist in planning and coordinating non-local events. The Development committee is looking for people to assist with fundraising efforts. If either of these committees is of interest to you, please contact rhoda@flintclub.org.

Attitude Campaign

The Attitude Campaign was started by Flint Club member Bill Daup who came up with the slogan, “Attitude The Magic Word for Success in Flint and Genesee County.” Bill is looking for help in creating and distributing bumper stickers and other merchandise carrying the slogan. If you would like to help him, please contact rhoda@flintclub.org.

Member Profile By Dick Ramsdell

My own roots lie in the south. I was born and lived through junior high years in Nashville, where my father was a professor at Vanderbilt. Memorable kid moments were being able to talk to Bill Wade when he was Vanderbilt's quarterback, being bat boy for the Vandy baseball team, and having Minnie Pearl as a Sunday School teacher. More seriously, I have very clear memories of riding the city bus downtown with my mother and being firmly chastised for wanting to sit in the back of the bus. I thought it was the coolest part of the bus and didn't want to sit next to her anyway, but was informed in no uncertain terms that that section was reserved for 'Colored Folks.'

High school in Evanston, college in the Iowa corn fields at Grinnell, grad school in Boston, and then two years of teaching in Tanzania, brought me to Michigan and ultimately to Flint. After all that moving around, why Flint? In 1965, Joe Roberson was one of the recruiters for the Flint

Schools, nationally recognized as the leader in the community school concept. Joe was an amazing salesperson, he sold me on Flint, and I ended up with my first teaching position in the U.S. at Flint Northwestern. 'Twas meant to be, because that's where I met Betty Macksood, my wife now of 41 years. We were married in 1966 and for that whole school year, since she was much better known at Northwestern than I, I was Mr. Macksood.

After a five year detour to the University of Chicago (I had followed my feelings for Africa back to graduate school, assuming that a degree and a college position in African History would be my future), Betty and I returned to Flint. I taught the "Black America" classes at Northern for four years, and then when the magnet program was created in 1976, moved to Central.

Right now, I'm the manager of the Flint Farmers' Market. Had not a clue what would be involved when I

agreed to become involved, but have thoroughly enjoyed meeting new people, learning a great deal about management and agriculture, and being a part of revitalizing one of the sacred old institutions of Flint.

My own perception is that, despite the continued negative press, there are many exciting things happening right now in Flint and Genesee County, and more to come. Most immediately, 2007 is a critical year for our town and the area. With school board elections in May and a mayoral primary in August and election in November, all of us here in Flint have the opportunity to move the city forward significantly. One of the things I shared with students at one of the last Model U.N. conferences I attended was the challenge: "It's your world, make a difference." I firmly believe that. For all of us, whether we are in Flint, returning to Flint, or supporting Flint from afar, this year of 2007 is a critical year in determining the future of the town we all care about a great deal.

HOMETOWN HEADLINES

We're No. 1! Flint named nation's best walking city

A national walking magazine has named Flint the best city for walkers in the nation and the Crim Festival of Races as the most walker-friendly event. Read the complete Flint Journal article at: <http://www.mlive.com/flint/stories/index.ssf?/base/sports-2/1176213096111380.xml&coll=5>

CULTURE CONNECTION

Flint After Dark, April 27, 2007

Performance to be held at U of M Flint Theater as part of the Masters of the Jazz & the Blues Series presented by The Whiting.

Peter "Madcat" Ruth, **Joel Brown** and **Chris Brubeck**, the three outstanding and versatile musicians of Triple Play, bring a rare level of joy, virtuosity, and American spirit to the folk, blues, jazz, funk and classical music they perform. Plus, join us for **Flint After Dark** and experience friends, food, and great entertainment. The package includes:

- Stop 1: Flint Farmers Market from 6-7:30pm
Food by Steady Eddy's. D'Vine Wines. MCC Jazz Combo
- Stop 2: UM-Flint Theatre at 8pm
Triple Play performance
- Stop 3: Aloha Lounge (newly renovated - no cover charge)
Cash Bar & Grill. Jazz and Motown vocalist Grace Thomas to perform.

All 3 Stops: \$40 Concert Stop only: \$25 Call the Ticket Center at 810.237.7333 or visit www.thewhiting.com.

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Flint Club is a virtual, community-based network for Flint, Michigan. The Club is a 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization with more than 600 members that aims to link people to the life of the city no matter where they live. Contact Rhoda Matthews, Executive Director, Flint Club at (810) 233-5468 and or rhoda@flintclub.org for more information.

Send correspondence to Flint Club, P.O. Box 7604, Flint, MI 48507. Visit Flint Club World Headquarters, Capitol Theatre Building, 134 E. Second St., Flint, MI 48502. Call locally (810) 233-5468 or toll-free 1-866-54-FLINT. Fax 810-233-5556.