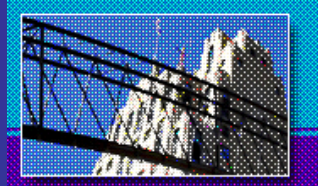


# Flint Diaspora

“SPREADING THE NEWS ABOUT FLINT”



## Mission

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

## 70's Slammin' Disco Bash

The disco balls will dazzle and the bell bottoms will chime as Flint Club proudly hosts an opening night after-party/fundraiser, **February 29th**, at Red Ink Studios to celebrate the premier of Will Ferrell's latest comedy **“Semi-Pro”**, which is set right here in Flint in the 1970's.

The party will have a 70's theme, with dancing, singing, basketball and costume contests. Please join us as we boogie the night away. The party is open to the public and tickets are \$15 at the door— that includes food and drinks. Doors open at 9pm. Red Ink is located just north of the Farmers Market at 101 Burton St.

Flint Club members are also invited to join us for an opening night screening of the film at Trillium Theaters. Show times are unavailable at this time, but we would like to assemble a group to see the movie around 6pm. Watch your email inboxes for more information. We hope to see you there!

Flint Club members in other cities across the nation and around the globe are encouraged to form Semi-Pro opening night screening groups in their areas. Please contact Carol-Anne Blower ([carolanne@flintclub.org](mailto:carolanne@flintclub.org)) for more information or to share the story of your Semi-Pro event.



## Flint on the Web

### [www.Semipromovie.com](http://www.Semipromovie.com)

The official web site of the film includes an online trailer, Semi-Pro downloads and information on their music video contest.

### [www.Flintradio.org](http://www.Flintradio.org)

Flint is on its way to once again having a community radio station. The station is not broadcasting yet, but there will be an organizational meeting on February 18th. For more information on this exciting addition to the Flint radio spectrum, visit [Flintradio.org](http://Flintradio.org).

### [www.highschoolsports.mlive.com](http://www.highschoolsports.mlive.com)

Flint sports fans can now follow their teams from anywhere in the world. Mlive has teamed up with the Flint Journal to offer extensive coverage of Flint High School sports including articles, game schedules and a scoreboard. Just visit the address above and type in your school in the search box on the left side of the screen to follow your favorite Flint Central, Southwestern or Northern sports teams throughout the school year.

### [www.forum.skyscraperpage.com/showthread.php?t=141658](http://www.forum.skyscraperpage.com/showthread.php?t=141658)

Fans of Flint architecture or photography should know about this forum on skyscraperpage.com The forum includes many photos of Flint's historic cityscape.

## Community Corner

### Mortgage Crisis Public Discussion

Thousands of homeowners across the country are having trouble keeping up with their monthly payments, facing the possibility of losing their homes -- and Michigan is among the states witnessing the highest foreclosure rates in the nation.

A diverse panel of local experts will come together this month at Mott Community College to discuss the mortgage crisis and the impact it may have on the community's future. "Is the Mortgage Mess Foreclosing on Our Future?," the topic of a panel discussion scheduled from **7:30 to 9 p.m., on Tuesday, Feb. 19 in the auditorium of the MCC Regional Technology Center**, is being presented by the Flint Area Public Affairs Debates. The event is free and open to the public.

Panelists scheduled for the program addressing the mortgage crisis and related issues include Janice Gooley, Genesee County Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (MPRI) In-Reach Coordinator (former Director of Housing Services); Pete Banwell, owner of Hawthorne Realty in Flint; and Chris Douglass, an instructor with the University of Michigan-Flint Department of Economics. Genesee County Treasurer Dan Kildee will serve as moderator.

In addition, representatives from a host of local agencies have been invited to share housing and real estate information at the program, including Salem Housing, Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), Genesee County Land Bank, Mission of Peace, Metro Housing Partnership and the Greater Eastside Community Association.

For more information, please contact Karen Wilkinson, Chair of the Flint Area Public Affairs Debates and Head of the Department of Liberal Studies at Kettering University at (810) 762-7827. **Flint Club is a sponsor of this event.**

### Volunteer Opportunities

Starting in February, Flint Club is going to have year-round monthly membership volunteer opportunities to give back to the city we all love and to create a presence in our community of active Flint Club membership. The days and times of these activities will vary; some will be an hour or two (like with the Red Cross or the Children's Museum), and some will be a little longer (like a neighborhood clean-up). Everyone is welcome to participate (and bring friends and family) Check the website often to see what we will be doing next. If you know of an organization that could use our help email us your suggestions ([info@flintclub.org](mailto:info@flintclub.org)).

### February's Volunteer Opportunity

This month's volunteer opportunity is **Tuesday, February 19th from 3-5pm** at the American Cancer Society. They need help with a large mailing. We know that is a bad time for the folks who work 9-5, so we need anyone that can fit that into their schedules to help us out!

If you want to help, call Carol-Anne at 233-5468 or drop her an email at [carolanne@flintclub.org](mailto:carolanne@flintclub.org). The American Cancer Society is located at 2413 S. Linden Rd. Suite A.

### eMagazine Planning Meeting

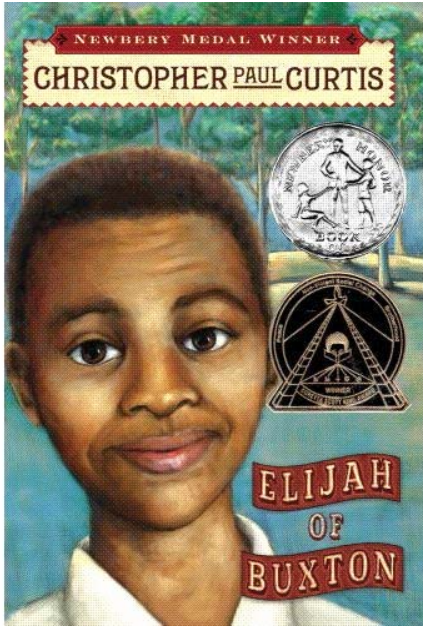
**Flint Club's eMagazine** is still in the planning stages and we need your help to make this venture a success. The next planning meeting will be held **Wednesday, March 5th, at 6pm** at the Flint Club office on Second St. Writers, photographers and interested community members welcome. Contact Craig Farrington ([craig@flintclub.org](mailto:craig@flintclub.org)) for more information.

### Who We Are

|                   |   |  |
|-------------------|---|--|
| Rhoda Matthews    | Executive Director                        | <a href="mailto:Rhoda@flintclub.org">Rhoda@flintclub.org</a>         |
| Sonyita Scales    | Program Director                          | <a href="mailto:Sonyita@flintclub.org">Sonyita@flintclub.org</a>     |
| Carol-Anne Blower | Director of Membership and Special Events | <a href="mailto:Carolanne@flintclub.org">Carolanne@flintclub.org</a> |
| Katrice Horton    | Program Assistant                         | <a href="mailto:Katriceh@umich.edu">Katriceh@umich.edu</a>           |
| Craig Farrington  | Communications Consultant                 | <a href="mailto:Craig@flintclub.org">Craig@flintclub.org</a>         |

*“Be the Solution”*

## “Elijah of Buxtom” Flies into the Hearts of Readers by Cathy Lancaster



Every person has something “inside so strong it flies forever” and Elijah Freeman finds that strength within himself through the course of Christopher Paul Curtis’s new book. *Elijah of Buxtom* is not Curtis’s first coming of age novel but it might just be his strongest one yet. Curtis, a Flint Native, currently lives in Canada where most of *Elijah of Buxtom* takes place. In the Canadian woods surrounding the settlement of Buxtom, Elijah finds his inner strength during the struggles of those closest to him.

Curtis’s approach on the issue of slavery is fresh, as the book focuses on Elijah, the first free-born in a settlement created for escaped slaves from America. The Buxtom Settlement Creed states that “One helping one to uplift all,” and as the novel progresses the reader discovers that the bond of the settlement is unbreakable and Elijah discovers his role in keeping the Creed.

**Elijah’s fears are often exaggerated to the point that the reader might just find herself unable to stop laughing even after they’ve ended the chapter!**

While *Elijah of Buxtom* is a children’s book, readers of all ages gain insight to the horrors, fears and heroism that escaped slaves faced in the 1860’s through the eyes of young Elijah. The scars that the residents of Buxtom carry are both visible and deep beneath the surface of their skin. Elijah ponders at one point that “Maybe all the sad things ‘neath the scars and burns and the pieces that were missing off of their kin were stories best not looked at too hard.” Elijah comes to understand that those in the settlement are the strength and protection for each other from the hardships of the past;

“Once them women bunched up like that in Mrs. Holton’s parlour, it seemed like they’d built a wall of Jericho ‘round us, and a hundred Joshuas and a thousand children couldn’t’ve knocked the wall down if they’d blowed trumpets and shouted till their throats bust.”

***Elijah of Buxtom* is not Curtis’s first coming of age novel but it might just be his strongest one yet.**

A self-described fragile boy, Elijah’s fears are often exaggerated to the point that the reader might just find herself unable to stop laughing even after they’ve ended the chapter! After a humorous event dealing with “hoop” snakes, Sarah, Elijah’s mother, warns him that “a coward die a thousand deaths, a brave boy don’t die but once... Ain’t *nothing* in the world worth being that afear’d of, son. Nothing.” All too soon Elijah must take that advice to heart as he faces the frightening reality of the struggle between captivity and freedom.

The reader often finds herself in Elijah’s mind. For instance, one ponders the good and evil in characters such as the Right Reverend Deacon Doctor Zephariah Connerly, the Third, whom Elijah simply calls “Preacher.” Also, readers will laugh at the misinterpretation and seriously contemplate the trouble that soon follows for Elijah when he learns the lesson that “Familiarity breeds contempt!” Curtis spins a strong character with Elijah, as one can place themselves in the shoes of this young boy, coming of age, and experiencing certain freedoms and the loss of innocence.

*Elijah of Buxtom* is a unique literary experience in historical fiction that has gained Curtis the 2008 Newbery Honor and the 2008 Coretta Scott King Author awards. Readers will gain a special place in their hearts for a young man named Elijah and his newfound appreciation for freedom.



***To learn more about Christopher Paul Curtis, please visit his website:***

[www.randomhouse.com/features/christopherpaulcurtis/books.htm](http://www.randomhouse.com/features/christopherpaulcurtis/books.htm)

## Member Profile by Craig Farrington



I'm the third generation in my family to call Flint home. My grandfather had his own landscaping business in Flint during the Great Depression and my father retired from AC Spark Plug. I attended Freeman Elementary School and McKinley Middle School and I'm a graduate of Flint Central High School and the University of Michigan-

Flint. I've lived on every side of Flint at one time or another, but I've recently returned to my roots on Flint's south end after spending three years living on the shores of Lake Superior in Marquette, Michigan where I earned my M.A. in English and Pedagogy at Northern Michigan University.

My wife Jennifer and I returned to Flint for many reasons, but mostly we wanted to live among our friends and family in a city, that despite its hardships, we will always consider our true home. I've seen many people move far away from Flint over the years only to return. I've heard it said that the Citizen's Bank Weather Ball has a peculiar gravity that pulls Flint's native born home, but perhaps it is just the smell of coney in the air.

Today I work as a communications consultant and Flint Club is my primary client. I love working towards a better Flint and I couldn't have found a job that suits my personality better. Flint is full of passionate people that work hard daily to make this a better place to live and raise a family and I want to do my part to revitalize my much-maligned hometown.

I understand why many of my friends have left Flint over the years. Our city still has a long way to go on the road to recovery, but this is an exciting time to be living in Flint. There is new construction on Saginaw Street, people are returning to downtown, and UM-Flint is finally building dorms. There is an energy in the air that makes me proud to call Flint home once again.

Wherever my travels have taken me, I've received a certain amount of respect just for coming from such a strange and fiercely-independent city. There are still many challenges facing Flint, but I think that the worst is over and we can finally pick up the pieces and rebuild the city that I love.

***If you would like to share your story with Flint Club members around the world, just let us know. Send us an email at [info@flintclub.org](mailto:info@flintclub.org) with the subject line: Member Profile.***



### February Member Meeting

Please join us February 28th at 6pm at the Flint Club office on East Second St. for our monthly membership meeting. We will be discussing upcoming Flint Club events and how you can get involved. We hope to see you there. Contact Carol-Anne ([carolanne@flintclub.org](mailto:carolanne@flintclub.org)) for more information.

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscribers are welcome to reproduce, utilize and distribute any and all portions of this newsletter on the condition that Flint Club/Flint Diaspora is cited as the source. Subscribe by joining Flint Club online at [www.flintclub.org/membership](http://www.flintclub.org/membership). Unsubscribe by sending an email to [unsubscribe-flintclub@yahoo.com](mailto:unsubscribe-flintclub@yahoo.com). Further information about the newsletters and an archive of recent issues are available from [www.flintclub.org](http://www.flintclub.org).

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 [carolanne@flintclub.org](mailto:carolanne@flintclub.org) for more information.

Send correspondence to Flint Club, P.O. Box 7604, Flint, MI 48507. Visit Flint Club World Headquarters, 134 E. Second St., Downtown Flint, next to the Capitol Theater building Flint, MI 48502