

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

2008 is off to a great start. The new year ahead is full of promise and possibilities. Here are three upcoming events where you can support Flint Club and learn more about how you can “*be the solution*” to Flint’s revitalization.

Flint Club Fundraiser, Saturday January 19th, 5 – 7pm at the Soggy Bottom Bar (\$10 Suggested Donation)

Flint Club Member Meeting, January 24th, 6pm at the Flint Club office

Brainstorming Meeting for Flint Club’s new eMagazine venture, Jan 31st, 6pm at the Flint Club office



Flint on the Web

Four New Web Sites That Focus on Flint

FlintGoodStuff.com

Also known as FlintPride.net and *The Good Stuff Radio Network*, the site describes itself as “a collaborative effort of two local business men who are sick and tired of hearing nothing but negativity in the city where we have chosen to live and ply our trades. ... We want to tell the world about the people, business and institutions that have taken it upon themselves to make this a better place to live both as in thanks for their efforts but also as an inspiration to the rest of us!” The site offers a discount card to its readers and well as providing a place for them to sound off on their favorite spots in Flint and who they think serves the best Coney.

Geneseefun.com

Genesee fun is “a comprehensive on-line resource for Arts, Culture, Entertainment, Events, Sports and Recreation.” It provides information on theaters, museums, and outdoor venues throughout Genesee County, Holly and Owosso. The site is part of a project administered by the Greater Flints Arts Council (GFAC). It offers a community events calendar and a fully searchable index of cultural offerings for every age and interest.

Restorethecore.wordpress.com

Restore the Core is Flint Club member and Downtown-Flint legend Joel Rash’s first venture into the blogosphere. It focuses on development efforts in downtown Flint and across the county—with particular attention paid to local talent, regional networks, national trends and international possibilities.

Takenoprisoners.info

Take No Prisoners was the best public access music show of all time and now, thanks to this massive online archive, the diverse, vibrant, and legendary Flint underground music scene of the 1980s and 1990s lives again. The site was developed by Flint native Aaron Stengel and offers a huge selection of streaming video and radio shows plus music demo downloads.

Community Corner

29th Annual Tribute Dinner to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Sarvis Center's main dining and conference room, where many Flint residents come each year to vote, was the site, the night of Thursday January 10th, of a powerful and moving tribute dinner to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. There were many stirring moments in the night's program, but three stand out as living testaments to the progress we have made as a society and as reminders of how far we still have to go to achieve Dr. King's dream.

Blake Odum, from GAMMA Delta Kudos fraternity brought many in the room to tears with a compelling rendition of Dr. King's most famous speech—his "I have a Dream" speech that was delivered on the steps on the Lincoln memorial in the summer of 1963 during the historic March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Mr. Odum's delivery was magical; he brought Dr. King's spirit to life with the strength and power of his voice.

The night's keynote speaker was Tim Wise, Director of the Association for White Anti-Racist Education and author of *White Like Me*. Mr. Wise surprised many in the room by giving a speech that transcended the traditional norms of tribute dinners. His speech, which lasted just under an hour, was a clarion call to action to "White" Americans to abandon their complacency and join the struggle against institutional racism.

The evening was scheduled to end with a group chorus of the first verse of "We Shall Overcome", but due to some jibes from Mr. Wise about only doing the first verse, the room, led by School Board Member Harold Woodson (who has a long history with the civil rights movement and a personal connection to the song) sang all four verses hand-in-hand.

Envision Michigan Story/Photo/Video Contest

What Do You Love About Michigan? What Would You Like to See Change? What's the Best Vision for Michigan's Future?

The center for Michigan wants to know your answer to these questions and they've started a poetry/story/photo/video contest with over \$30,000 in prizes including \$5,000 scholarships to any Michigan College. To learn more about this exciting new contest and how you can enter, visit their website at www.thecenterformichigan.net.



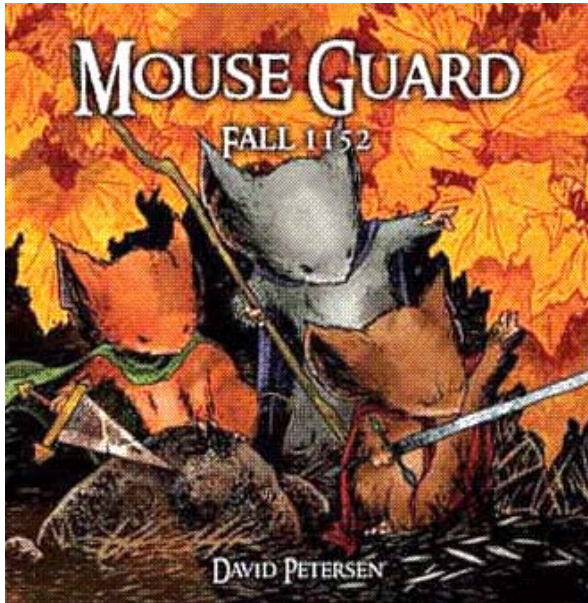
Who We Are

There are some new faces around the Flint Club office. Some staffers have new titles and responsibilities and some longtime volunteers have come on board to help Flint Club achieve its goal of making Flint a better place to live. Here is a quick summary of who we are, what we do and how to contact us.

Rhoda Matthews	Executive Director	Rhoda@flintclub.org
Sonyita Scales	Director of Civic Engagement Initiatives	Sonyita@flintclub.org
Carol-Anne Blower	Director of Member and Program Services	Carolanne@flintclub.org
Katrice Horton	Program Assistant	Katrice@flintclub.org
Craig Farrington	Communications Consultant	Craig@flintclub.org
Kemo Parks	Program Assistant	Bigkemo@hotmail.com

“Be the Solution”

Flint Native Creates Mouse World by Cathy Lancaster



David Petersen originally began work on his award winning *Mouse Guard* comic series back when he attended Flint Central High School in the 1990's. Graduating in 1995, he went on to study art at Mott Community College and finished college at Eastern Michigan University. After college Petersen kept thinking back to illustrating a world, much like the ones he created with his best friend in high school.

On Saturday, January 5, 2008, Petersen returned to Flint to speak about his success and share his comic world: *Mouse Guard* with an audience at the Flint Public Library. Staging a reading of "*Mouse Guard: Fall 1152*," Petersen and three friends had the audience laughing, hissing and snapping along with the exciting world of mice who guard their kingdom from predators such as snakes and crabs. His friends, Jesse Glenn, Emerson Jones and Ann Glenn, all Flint Natives, have characters based on them in the series and have been a part of Petersen's story development for years.

Petersen told the library audience that he began to self-publish *Mouse Guard* after attending Comic Conventions where he would display his art work. After multiple questions of "When is this coming out?" Petersen decided to go ahead and print a series himself. At a later convention, Petersen approached publishers and showed them his work. One of the first publishers he approached, Archaia Studios Press, accepted it, along with Petersen's terms, for mass publication.

On average, each chapter of *Mouse Guard* takes Petersen about two months to complete. Of course, as he told the audience, the holidays and other daily life events sometimes put things on hold and it is taking longer to issue the latest chapter in "*Winter 1152*."

During the event, Petersen spoke of his childhood comic store on Fenton Road: "Comic Relief was very helpful in ordering the book early and suggesting it to their fans. They have always been helpful making sure to order and hold copies for friends and family. I am very lucky that they are as excited about *Mouse Guard* as I am."

"Flint is where I grew up. I was the kid who would have attended events like these to try and find out the secrets for succeeding in illustration...I just hope that anyone in the Flint area who has those dreams can also reach out for them."

"It's a lot of fun!" Petersen said when asked about his return to Flint for signings, "... on a bigger scope, Flint is where I grew up. I was the kid who would have attended events like these to try and find out the secrets for succeeding in illustration. The Tom Phort Gallery event [Flint Institute of Arts show, late 1990's] was one of those for me, and Tom's art-work definitely inspired the early drawing of mice for *Mouse Guard*. I just hope that anyone in the Flint area who has those dreams can also reach out for them."

Petersen quietly shared with the library crowd that in 2007, he was awarded the Russ Manning Most Promising New-comer Award for the *Mouse Guard* series. Jokingly, he compares the award with "those awards that you get if you do not win the Emmy." Emmy or not, the award has put Petersen on the comic world map. If you would like to meet Petersen in person and see a collection of his work he will be back in Flint in March, at the Flint Institute of Arts.

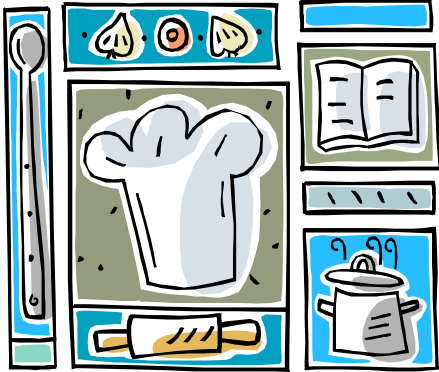


Petersen at his recent Flint Public Library event.

Photo by Cathy Lancaster

To learn more about *Mouse Guard* visit www.mouseguard.net, visit a comic store near you or check it out @ your local library

Member Profile: Seth High



My family moved to Flint when I was ten years old, when my father became the pastor at Community Presbyterian Church in the Civic Park Neighborhood. I attended Scott Elementary, Walker Elementary, Longfellow Middle School, and graduated from Flint Northern in 1994. At Northern, I was an all-city and all-conference golfer, and an all-city baseball player. I also took classes at Central, where I was active in the Theatre and Model UN programs. Although my family later left the area, as an adult I returned to Flint to pursue unique professional opportunities such as being the sous chef at the Flint Golf Club, and opening Daniel's Chophouse, where I was later chef de cuisine, and later the chef at Pestos in Swartz Creek.

Today, I work for and with renowned chef Todd English. I began working for him in New York at his restaurant *English is Italian*, and was part of the opening team for his restaurant in

New Orleans—where I was later the chef de cuisine. I have recently relocated to Los Angeles, to be a part of the opening team for his latest concept—a Latin-inspired steakhouse called Beso. It will be located in downtown Hollywood and will open in early February. I live with my girlfriend, Jessica, a pastry chef, and our two mutts Ford and Chevy.

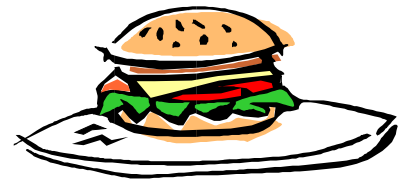
As a kid, I wanted to be all sorts of unlikely things. After leaving college, I sort of stumbled my way into kitchens and began working my way up. I often joke that my profession chose me, rather than the other way around. That said, I love what I do. Depending on the day, I'm an artist, a craftsman, an accountant, a business manager, a salesman, a personnel manager, a customer service person, but never, ever, hungry.

I remain fiercely proud of Flint, and of being from Flint. Though I wasn't born there, and have lived a half dozen other places, it is Flint that most informs my work ethic and world view. The blue collar values I observed and learned in Flint have served me in my professional life by constantly pushing me to improve and to fight through adversity with loyalty and pride. I feel that I received a uniquely excellent public education in Flint from dedicated, passionate teachers.

Flint is a fascinating place. There are some things that it does surprisingly well; live theatre for example. I've lived in larger cities that don't have the sort of involved, widespread, publicly-engaged amateur theatre available in Flint. This incubation spreads itself to other arts opportunities as well. Music and visual art opportunities exist in a surprisingly high density in Flint.

I would love to someday return to Flint, open a little bistro downtown, and cook comfortable, excellent food in a friendly, warm environment, and be the sort of place that couples come to celebrate life's benchmarks—where families can come and enjoy each other's company.

I love the kindness of the people of Flint (once you get past the crusty exterior), and their proud, standoffish sense of self determination. I also love the fascinating history of the place, and Halo-Burger. Hold the olives.



SUBSCRIPTIONS

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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

or call us at (810) 233-5468