

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

Member Meeting

The July member meeting is slated for July 26 at 6:00pm. Bring a friend - new members welcome!

Member Mailing

Did you receive your June mailing? We want to know. The envelope contained a letter from Executive Director Rhoda Matthews along with a complimentary bookmark. Send a note to info@flintclub.org.

Taste of Flint events for members not living in Flint!

Have you been craving an original coney? Then join Flint Club for a Taste of Flint! Taste of Flint events will take place in Chicago and Washington DC on August 25, 2007 and will include original coney dogs, raffle items, and networking with your fellow members.

Bring coney dogs to your town by hosting a Taste of Flint event. If you would like to be a party host, or for details about the Chicago or DC event, please contact Melissa Arthur at arthur.melissa@gmail.com.

Community Corner - Community Challenge Update

Summer Civic Engagement Training is beginning soon! It's not too late to sign up at www.thecommunitychallenge.org.

Flint Club will lead the effort to conduct the Community Action Planning Process (CAPP – formerly known as Catalytic Conversations) sessions in various communities throughout Genesee County. Clio is slated to begin in late August and the Southern Lakes Region (Fenton, Linden, Fenton Twp., Mundy Twp., etc.) will commence sometime in October. We are excited to offer a condensed version as a part of the Mott Leadership Academy with area teens the last week of July. Continue to check the website information on these and other activities.

Member Profile By Brian Willingham

I was born and raised in Flint. I'm 42 years old. I have lived in Flint all of my life with the exception of 7-years that I served the U.S. Army. I'm a 1983 graduate of Flint Central. I am a City of Flint Police officer and a columnist for the Flint Journal. I was named a distinguished alumnus of Central in 2002 in the field of Human Rights for my first book "Thunder Enlightening." My second book "Soul of a Black Cop" recently won a Bronze Medal in the Independent Publishers book awards for best non-fiction Great Lakes Region.

My mother Shirley is probably my greatest influence. She set a great

example for me in terms of giving to the community. She never got the credit that I do though she did more under much tougher circumstances. My experience in the Army influenced my career as a police officer. It was in the Army that I learned the value of serving my country.

I have been married to my wife Rhonda for 17-years now. We have three children. As a child the very first thing that I wanted to be was a sports star. There's a little kid in me that still wants to be a star. My Flint heritage has taught a concept that Dr. King called having a tough mind and a tender heart. In that concept

people are able to think critically but remain compassionate. This helps me both in my personal life as a husband and father and also professionally as a police officer/writer.

A favorite place in Flint that I would take with me wherever I would go would be the Brown Sugar Café. For the people of Flint to live their dreams they must first believe in themselves when nobody else might. Secondly, be willing to take chances that others in your position might not be willing to take. My greatest accomplishment is being recognized by the White House for volunteer service to the Flint community. This is the greatest legacy that I believe that I can leave my family and my city.

CULTURE CONNECTION

By Craig Farrington

(Flint Club member Rob Rosario contributed to this article)

Country Dreams are Coming True

The bright lights of Nashville are a long way away from the red bricks of downtown Flint, but rising country star and Flint native Miko Marks has finally arrived.

If you are a fan of the Flint's proud musical tradition or just beautiful, soul searching country music then Miko Marks is someone you should know. In 2006 she was named 'Female Vocalist of the Year' by Indie World and 'Best New Country Artist' by *New Music Weekly Magazine*. Her debut album *Freeway Bound* was named 'Album of the Year' at the Independent Music Awards and her second album *It Feels Good* is set for widespread release this August.

Her music has a classic/new country feel reminiscent of Reba or Shania, but with an independent edge. She is both a singer and a songwriter. Her songs explore the many facets of her life--from being a young woman in love, to the pains and rewards of motherhood. Her words are insightful and honest with a voice that's sassy and soulful --as in this lyric from

"The Son My Daddy Never Had"

*I'm looking for a man that can handle me,
that takes me out to dance and lets me lead,
that isn't intimidated by the size of my truck,
and likes his cover girl covered in muck..*

Marks has kept an online diary on her website <http://www.mikomarks.com/> where she has chronicled her country road --from an early post where she celebrates quitting her day job to sing full-time, to her first tour and the release of her first album. Another moving passage from her diary recounts her performance before over 300,000 people at the National Mall in Washington D.C. for the Black Family Reunion in August of 2006. From her frequent diary posts and her active Myspace page it is clear that Miko Marks appreciates her fans and returns all the love and support they've shown her.

Marks keeps up a busy concert schedule--touring the nation with the Bill Pickett Rodeo and playing other venues from Dallas, Texas to Paris, France. Unfortunately, her tour schedule does not

include a stop in Michigan anytime soon, but you can listen to samples from both of her albums, "Freeway Bound" and "It Feels Good" at cdbaby.com. She has also released a video for a song from her first album titled "Mama", which stars her friend, fellow Grambling State University Alumnus and Grammy Award winner, Erykah Badu.

Miko Marks is a rising star whose country dreams are coming true. While she may now call California home when not touring, it's time Flint claimed her as one of our own.

As of this writing neither the Flint Public Library nor the Genesee District Library have her CDs on their shelves. This can easily be put to right. Listen to her music at <http://cdbaby.com/cd/mikomarks> and if you agree that she is a treasure worth sharing call your local library and request her albums--you'll be glad you did.

Related Links:

<http://www.myspace.com/mikkomarks>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/MikoMarksMusic>

Give Back

Flint Club has volunteer opportunities for everyone!

Do you have just 30 minutes and a phone? Help us make calls to Flint Club members to follow up on their questions and comments or to invite them to a Flint Club event.

Can you help out in the office an hour a week? We need help with data entry and other office work.

Flint Club receives many invitations to join other groups in promoting Flint as a great place - but we need your help! One upcoming event is an overnight celebration on the lawn of City Hall on Aug. 17 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Flint becoming the first city in the US to enact an open-housing law by public vote.

E-mail support@flintclub.org for more on these and many other events or volunteer opportunities. Thank you!

HOMETOWN HEADLINES

[A Dormitory for U-M Flint](#)

A dream more than 30 years in the making, the first dormitory for U-M Flint is finally coming to Downtown Flint! See more details at: <http://abclocal.go.com/wjrt/story?section=local&id=5479922> and then get a sense of the impact leaders and residents alike hope this development will have on our community by reading the Flint Journal Editorial at <http://www.mlive.com/flint/stories/index.ssf?base/news-3/1184687510181970.xml&coll=5>.

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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.
